COLLECTOR'S LUCK *in* FRANCE

ALICE VAN LEER CARRICK

THE popular author of *Collector's Luck* and *The Next-to-Nothing House* spent many months riding her favorite hobby in France, and this profusely illustrated book tells her adventures. Through Paris, its byways, quais, and fairs, Mrs. Carrick searches for antiques, and she tells the reader what he may expect to find and where to go to find it. Perhaps most important of all, prices are given, too — not only for the articles which Mrs. Carrick bought but for those she saw and thought some one else might want to buy.

And even a noncollector will feel himself engulfed in waves of possibilities when he reads of the beguiling adventures awaiting him at the Marché aux Puces, the Foire aux Jambons, and the Foire aux Ferrailles, to say nothing of the Marché aux Fleurs.

COLLECTOR'S LUCK IN FRANCE

An old bookseller on the Quais

COLLECTOR'S LUCK IN FRANCE

By

ALICE VAN LEER CARRICK

With Illustrations

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DEDICATION

First of all, to our beloved France who stretched out such generous hands to us, and then to Isabel and Louise and Marie and Teresa and Grace, all joyous companions along "the broad road that stretches"

APOLOGIA

No, I don't at all agree with Mr. Mencken's irritating, "Gentlemen go to London, others to Paris"; rather would I quote our Ambassador's finer phrase, "Paris belongs to the world." It does to me, anyhow! It is the only city I have ever known where I could be poor — and happy! I love the joy that comes to you there, so easily and for so very little; I love the quickly changing crowds, friendly, yet quite oblivious if you want to be ignored; the pleasant greetings as you enter each little shop; the reverent way all hats are lifted as a funeral slowly passes by; the smiles with which the flower-sellers thank you for the smallest purchase, declaring that "Madame is *too* kind." And I adore the contradictory charm of Paris, at once the busiest and the most leisurely city in the whole world. Nowhere else have I beheld such a throng of traffic as on the narrow, noisy rue de Vaugirard, but also nowhere else have I seen lumbering busses pause at the lilting pipe of a flageolet, and wait while a troop of sedate black goats amble their way across the street and climb upon the pavement by the Luxembourg Gardens.

Most of all I love the cats, and the way they are treated. Oh, those great, purring, handsome, pampered pussy-cats of Paris! I used to think that I should have to go back to ancient Egypt to be quite satisfied, for second in my heart to children come cats;

but now I know that all I 'll have to do is take the next boat for France. And my family are like-minded; we all acquired the gentle habit of making pilgrimages to pay our respects to certain fascinating pussies of the Latin Quarter: at the antiquity shops, calmly asleep in huge china bowls or reposing on old damasks; sitting at open doorways on the Boulevard, secure of admiration; or, in the cool of the evening, curled up contentedly on the ample laps of fat *concièrges*. I could make the surliest doorkeeper on earth love me — for I should love his cat. That 's the French version of the old proverb!

All this is part of the genuine goodness, the milk of human kindness, with which the land overflows; to me France is the most emotionally civilized of nations. And there were other moral delights. It was in Paris that I felt as if I first came face to face with real democracy. I 'm sure that never shall I see a shabby, itinerant tailor patching a coat, crosslegged on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum. But I did at the Louvre! And I know very well that if the little old *raccommodeur de faïence* had sat plying his trade against the State House walls, he would speedily have been "moved on." Ah, how I love those live-and-let-live Paris days!

Of course, when I say Paris, I mean all France, for Paris is its essence. You may think I write with too great an enthusiasm, but when I recall how professorially light was our purse, when I remember that

there were five of us, of varying ages and temperaments — when I consider these apparent obstacles, and yet realize how much we saw and loved, the riches that we shared, why, I know that I do not exaggerate all that France gave us. And these treasures may be yours just as they were ours. Don't wait until you can afford to travel with magnificence, always first-class or with a touring-car, and, at the journey's end, a personal, porcelain bathtub awaiting you. I own such luxury would be very pleasant, but, really, in comparison, it counts so infinitely less.

Naturally, we did n't do many tourist things; but then, we did n't want to. In Tours, for instance, where English and Americans are supposed to be incommodingly abundant, we spent one afternoon with friends, spoke casually to two Americans on the street, and met another at a *very* French tea-party. In three months, that was all. Our lives were as full of French people and French ideas and French atmosphere as we could fill them. Not that I don't love my compatriots. I do! But I don't have to go to France to see them! I am convinced that the ancient advice to imitate the Romans when in Rome has an inner meaning; in doing so you not only please the Romans, but you get so much more out of it yourselves. And I grow impatient with Americans who, returning, declare that nobody in France speaks French any more. These gilded tourists have lived *de luxe*, spent incredible sums of money — and they

might as well have gone to Palm Beach. Of the real France, the great soul of the country, they know nothing!

O—— has a little red-morocco diary, and almost every night he brings it out and reads it aloud, for in it he jotted down all the dailiness of our lives over there. It is the most entrancing story ever written, and we listen to it with wide and wistful eyes. I don't know whether to call it, "Do you remember," or, "A year ago to-day." But this I *do* know: that we are planning to write a sequel just as soon as we can reconcile the three necessary dimensions of time and space and money!

Alice Van Leer Carrick

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COLLECTOR'S LUCK IN FRANCE

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I

AU TEMPS JADIS

Wednesday, March 14, 1923

Dear Isabel:—

By this time you must have had my letter written on the steamer — a doleful enough note too, I am afraid, for in spite of my proud boast of Newburyport seafaring ancestry, I am a sailor who loves the ocean best near the shore. Of course there were moments of joy: times when the wide expanse of water looked like crumpled silver, or resembled a great blue Staffordshire platter with a rim of lilac lustre, and I was happy just to be alive. But then suddenly a black curtain of misery would fall, and I am honestly bound to confess that it stayed down most of the voyage. Such a pity! There were so many interesting people on board: a pretty violinist who has been touring the United States; a minor Parisian musical troupe; a group of young art students going back to their beloved Latin Quarter; a Follies girl; and an artist — a French Basque, who looked, with his dark face and swirling cape, as if he had stepped out of one of Goya's magic canvases. He was the real thrill of the trip: not only a pleasure to the eye, but obligingly talented; in the evenings

he danced fandangos for us and accompanied himself with nimbly clicking castanets. (By the way, he turns out to be a portrait painter of note, and to-day I have been admiring a serene and lovely group of his in the Luxembourg.) How you would have enjoyed it all, you to whom a life on the roughest ocean wave presents no problems. When you do come over, let me recommend the Rochambeau; the captain is blandly agreeable, the food very good, while the constant gayety makes the ship like a floating cabaret — all advantages, if you are a secure sailor.

But how blessedly dear land did seem to me! Only a sense of Orde's vivid chagrin kept me from kneeling like Columbus at San Salvador, and kissing the ground at my escape from the sea. It was a little shock at the customs to find that I had to pay a rather heavy duty on my well-worn, familiar typewriter, but that was the only blot on perfection.

Spring has come graciously early to France this year, and the countryside from Havre to Paris was all gentle green. Picture the wonder of it to me; for at home Hanover would still have been knee-deep in February snows, and the most daring blade of grass could not have appeared before April. But here, all along the way, men dressed in soft dull blues — colors which fell in agreeably with the landscape — were working in thrifty gardens, and broom and dandelions and primroses brightened the world with their varied yellows. And every now and then

a *pommier* in full bloom, or the deep sweet pink of a Judas tree against a cloudy sky.

Normandy is infinitely lovelier than I had fancied: less flat, with rolling, rich meadows, and rounded hills which remind you of New England. And, my dear, the houses! Little *fermes*, clay-walled and softly thatched; larger manor-houses, red-roofed and set in square enclosures of tall poplars; and, occasionally, high, high up, the flash of a white château. You may imagine the largess of antiquities with which I endowed them all, and the agonies I endured at having to pass them by unsearched. And it was an equal grief to go straight through Rouen — to see just a very ugly railway-station, and at a distance the lovely, reaching spires of the Cathedral. But I shall return; it is only an hour or two away from Paris, and unlike the less fortunate Conrad, for me there shall be a road back to Rouen.

We are quite settled here now in a little hotel on the rue Monsigny, a street only sixty or seventy years old, they tell me, but which looks, with its antiquated iron lamps — the sort, you know, I have always longed to install in Hanover — and its sedate houses of sober brown-gray stone, quite as if it had been built in the eighteenth century. It rained that first night; of course it rained, and I should have been disappointed if it had n't, for in Maupassant's stories — he who knew Paris better than anybody else — don't you remember how "une pluie fine, intermi-

nable" seems forever to be falling? And the next morning it poured torrents! But how could it rain in my heart, even if it rained in the city, when outside all Paris was waiting for me — sights and sounds I had dreamed of for years: a baker's boy scuttling by with a huge basket of *petits pains* on his head; the *clopin-clopant* of horses' hoofs on the wooden-paved streets; and, suddenly, under my windows, a burly water-vender who cried, "Ah, de l'eau, de l'eau, de l'eau, de l'eau," in a falling melody, so cadenced, so musical, that it was not difficult to believe his wares came from some enchanted spring. I am, you perceive, a romantic.

In the afternoon the weather changed as if by magic; the wind veered, and the sky became blue with masses of feather-bed clouds. We hurried out while Paris smiled to enjoy it all — up by the Louvre, across the Place du Carrousel, through the Tuileries, where small boys were sailing boats and early spring flowers bloomed in prim beds, and took an omnibus for the Left Bank, our destination being the Bon Marché for gloves, and a visit to the M——s, who have been here now for a fortnight. And, naturally enough, I hoped for antiquity shops. Literally, Isabel, on certain streets they are as thick as *pâtisseries*, and these seem to pop up every few feet. After we had bought our gloves, and stopped to eat our first real babas — *bien arrosés*, and, oh, so delicious! — we walked down a few steps into a tiny place

For thirty centimes you may ride to the Left Bank, a collector's paradise

where there was a scramble of everything in the windows: miniatures, engravings, frames, purses, glass, and china. But the *patron* had never heard of the silhouettes my heart desired, nor had the *patronne* in the next little shop, where there was the same jumble of the past. It needs a practised eye to discover treasures. Still, that 's just the way it is at home; you know how we have to poke and prowl about in New England to find what we want, and the only difference is that here in Paris there seem to be about fifty times as many chances, and at a fraction of what we are asked in America.

After the second refusal we grew a little discouraged,— remember, it was our first day, and we were in a strange city, — besides, it was late. So, not seeing a bus, we decided to take a short cut from the Boulevard St.-Germain across to the "Boul Mich," where the M——s are en pension. Ah, the lucky walk, the fortunate decision — for at the Boulevard Raspail, on a windy corner where we stopped to ask a direction, there was a watchmaker; in his window modern watches and old clocks, with a sprinkling of miniatures and engravings. In we went again, and this was how we made our wants known, a double enterprise since Orde is new at the antique game and I am very new at French. After the first "Bonjour, Madame," — for you must never enter a French shop without a figurative hat in hand and courteous greetings upon your lips, — Orde proffered his

request: "Madame, tenez-vous, par hasard, quelques vieilles silhouettes, des profils anciens, en noir, vous comprenez?" Madame shook her head blankly; then suddenly in some forgotten mental corner she must have found a vague memory, for, rummaging in the drawers of an old walnut secretary, full of miniatures, she took out my first French silhouette.

You 'll see him when I come home, of course, but I do wish you could behold him now, this gracious eighteenth-century gentleman in a round gilt frame, backed with faded blue silk. It is a small profile, the frame not quite three inches across, the head itself just an inch and a half in height. But it is beautifully done: painted in India ink, and then touched lightly with a faint grayish-blue shade so that the stock, the lace frills, the military frogs and buttons on the coat all are clear and fine. Even his hair, tied in a becoming queue, seems lightly powdered, and from the way it is dressed, and from his costume as well, I should put him in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Just think — he might have been a friend of Lafayette's, or gone gayly, with a smile on his lips, to a rendezvous with Madame Guillotine! But just who this gallant gentleman was, alas and alack, I never shall know!

But let me come back to practical matters — to the price I paid. Madame said, "Trente francs," but Orde, rankling with the sense of an injustice done him that morning when a shopkeeper had

The early nineteenth-century shadow-portraits of a worthy citizen and his good lady

dexterously added five francs to the figures already marked on a most necessary umbrella, turned to me and remarked, "C'est un peu trop cher, n'est-ce pas?" whereupon she immediately replied, "Vingt-cinq; et c'est mon dernier prix." Of course I took it gladly, and without more ado. Who would n't? At the present rate of exchange it amounted to only a little more than a dollar and a half, and even before the fall of the franc it would not have been dear to our way of thinking — about six dollars; although, in that case, it also would not have been marked so high; for prices have certainly been pushed up to adjust themselves to lowered money-values. However, I cannot get used to bargaining, because it is n't done in America, I suppose. But here — at least in antiquity shops — everybody is expected to *marchander*, and I do endeavor, with the result that my timid manner has become more boldly successful, though I trust it still remains ingratiating. But imagine how infuriated our Favorite Dealer would be if we tried to cheapen prices with him!

The next day we went sightseeing and shabby-shopping, too. Ah, Isabel, my dear, that 's the joy of antique-ing in Paris — you collect the past in so many, many ways. To come out upon the street after a triumphant quest and behold the sixteenth-century Tour St.-Jacques set against a saffron sky; to walk past the amiable Madame Récamier's *hôtel*, an equally lovable silhouette clasped in your guard-

ing hands; to take your *déjeuner* in a little restaurant where an eating-house of some sort has stood ever since the days of the Regency, comparing, between courses, your captured treasures — why, it is the apotheosis of collecting! Toss a pebble lightly into the air anywhere, and you hit history.

Naturally, we went without delay to Notre Dame; I 've always had a mad desire to see the hurtling towers from which Quasimodo dashed Claude Frollo to the earth: Victor Hugo's novel made an immense impression on my ten-year-old mind, although I have not read it since. Still this is a letter, not a guide-book, and I do not repeat my raptures; Notre Dame, enduring, will await your coming, I am convinced. But it was my first great Gothic cathedral, my first glimpse backward into the Middle Ages, and yet, do you know what it will always remind me of? — violets! For I bought my earliest bunch from a high-piled barrow an old woman was pushing through the square; perhaps they were sent to whisper of Esmeralda's gentle spirit. Indeed, I know I shall remember flowers whenever I think of Paris. For a tiny fifty-centime piece you may buy a nosegay, blue and fragrant; for double the price, a sheaf of yellow daffodils to gild your room when the weather sulks and the sun refuses to shine; and gilly-flowers, pinks, and lilacs are plentiful and cheap. The little restaurants and pâtisseries all have their bunches of daisies and poppies; even the antiquity

Marie and I have a way of meeting at the Odéon

The pair of pretty glass candlesticks, delicately fluted and quite charming

shops often show bouquets blooming in old china vases or adorning copper pots — it is a pleasant and unexpected sight.

There are several kinds of *boutiques de curiosités:* tiny holes-in-the-wall where, if you have patience, you may find delightful trinkets for a song; larger shops, just as higgledy-piggledy, everything from needle-point footstools to discarded Church ornaments — rooms as fresh and charmingly arranged as any attractive parlor ever could be. And the names are even more engaging. Here are just a few of them: *Au Temps Jadis, Aux Anges Gothiques, À la Croix de Jeanette, Au Vieux Rouet, Au Temps du Roy, Le Vieux Logis.* Are n't they lovely? Enough to tempt the francs out of any collector's pocketbook. And as yet I 've just scratched the surface. Lightly! I have n't been to Batignolles — where Zola bought his Rouen ware — or to Montmartre, or to any of the expensive city shops, where prices are beyond the dreams of avarice. But fancy, Isabel, on the rue des Saints-Pères, between the Quai Voltaire and the Boulevard St.-Germain, there are thirty-odd antique shops. This is but one instance; every boulevard on the Left Bank has scores, and they are scattered up and down all the little side-streets. Don't worry about my losing the addresses: they are engraved upon my memory. Moreover, I am making out a complete and careful list for your use.

It was on the rue de Grenelle that I found my

second silhouette. Actually the place looked like a furniture shop: old chairs on the sidewalk, faded damasks in the window, with just enough miniatures to make it a possible chance. We lifted the latch and walked in, and Orde declared that my hands trembled with eager joy when the proprietor put into them a lovely black-and-gold Empire lady — *églomisée*, of course—who, for another twenty-five francs, became mine. True, she lacks a frame; but done on glass, she represents a thoroughly French genre: the kind, you know, where the glass is first washed with gold, then, after the profile and border design have been delicately etched out, painted over with black, and finally backed with protecting paper. They are almost impossible to pick up in America; I know of two in the Essex Institute and a few others in private collections: that 's all. I think my lady is of lofty lineage; in spite of gilt comb and earrings she wears a hussar's coat, and if you remember that German costume-book I am forever poring over, you may recall a portrait of Queen Louise of Prussia in a colonel's costume, which this very much resembles. Paris is full of old frames: tortoise-shell, gilt, and wood, from ten francs up, and so I have no disturbing doubt of being able to enclose my profile fittingly. And even if I can't find one agreeably aged, I still can have an old frame perfectly reproduced for only twenty-five francs more.

Good-night, Isabel. I 'll go on to-morrow, but now

All three for twenty francs at the obliging little shop on the rue de Vaugirard

I must hasten to my most comfortable bed. It must be late and late; droves of noisy taxis are beginning to hoot their way along, for the theatres are just closing, and that in Paris means twelve o'clock at least. Besides, I am dog-tired. For three days I have tramped up and down, growing rich in the lore of city streets, but very poor in shoe-leather, I fear.

Sunday morning

Three whole days have gone by without my taking my typewriter in hand to wish you well — days so swiftly filled that I know your collecting heart will comprehend and forgive. Sightseeing, antique-ing, and a little necessary shopping have taken all my time. Marie and I have a way of meeting at the Odéon — think how romantic to have a rendezvous under the statue of Augier — and then going on to the Luxembourg or the Cluny or to some old church, and of course stopping at every antiquity shop that we find. My French improves, or anyhow I am less tongue-tied. The first day I bought shell hairpins by the simple process of removing one and holding it up to public view; but now I can ask in fairly intelligible French for what I want. And my luck has grown with my language. Thursday morning I bought a pair of pretty glass candlesticks, six inches tall, delicately fluted, and quite charming, once I had washed off the accumulated grime of generations. *Again* I paid twenty-five francs, — I grow super-

stitious about this price, — and I got them at a shop on the rue de Tournon, a street which runs from the rue de Vaugirard down to the rue St.-Sulpice. There were other desirable things, too, for very little: a small Empire clock with slender pillars and a quaint painted picture for sixty francs; a shaving-stand, oval and ivory-inlaid, for one hundred; and a number of pretty bonbonnières and *boîtes à mouches* — which we call patch-boxes — from twenty francs on. I know the figures seem a little staggering, but what you must do is to multiply by seven cents — a little more than the franc is worth at present — to understand about what I paid.

My next good fortune was to find an even smaller shop almost at the head of the rue de Vaugirard; here the prices were more than moderate, and the owner accommodating and delightfully easy to comprehend. I now drop in quite frequently, and there is always something I want. My first purchase was three candlesticks — a pair of plain brass with saucer bases and sliding buttons at the side; the third, a trifle taller but with a domed foot: all three for twenty francs. And the next day I got my fourth even cheaper: for five francs. This is an older type, for the others might have lighted the good bourgeoisie to bed every night of the early nineteenth century. Madame called it "époque Louis Treize," a name, by the way, that French dealers bestow liberally upon antiquities, just as ours in America call every-

The "Louis Treize" candlestick

thing "Chippendale." The candlestick itself is five inches tall, the base is octagonal, and instead of a button it has a little hole where a nail once fitted to lift out the spent candle-end. Of course I 'd like to think that D'Artagnan used one like it when he lodged with Père Bonacieux; but I honestly think it might have been just as probably an eighteenth-century pattern, too.

Madame has some brass and copper warming-pans — *bassinoires*, she calls them. I bought one for twenty-five francs, — I can't help it; it 's my destiny! — and it was brass, with such an appealing design of hearts-and-spades-and-clubs-and-diamonds. Do you suppose it was made to the order of some determined card-player? There was another, heavier and handsomer, for only five francs more; but somehow it was this first quaint fancy which appealed to me.

Yesterday I had another bit of luck. Going back to the shop on the rue de Tournon, I found that one of the little boîtes à mouches which I had looked at longingly, had fallen from fifty-five to forty-five francs. So I bought it for you to put on your lovely Sheraton card-table, which matches its blended tones of browns and soft golden yellows. It is made from some West Indian wood, I think, and the tortoise-shell with which it is lined completely harmonizes with it. Set in the centre is a small gilt-rimmed portrait of an early-nineteenth-century lady, with

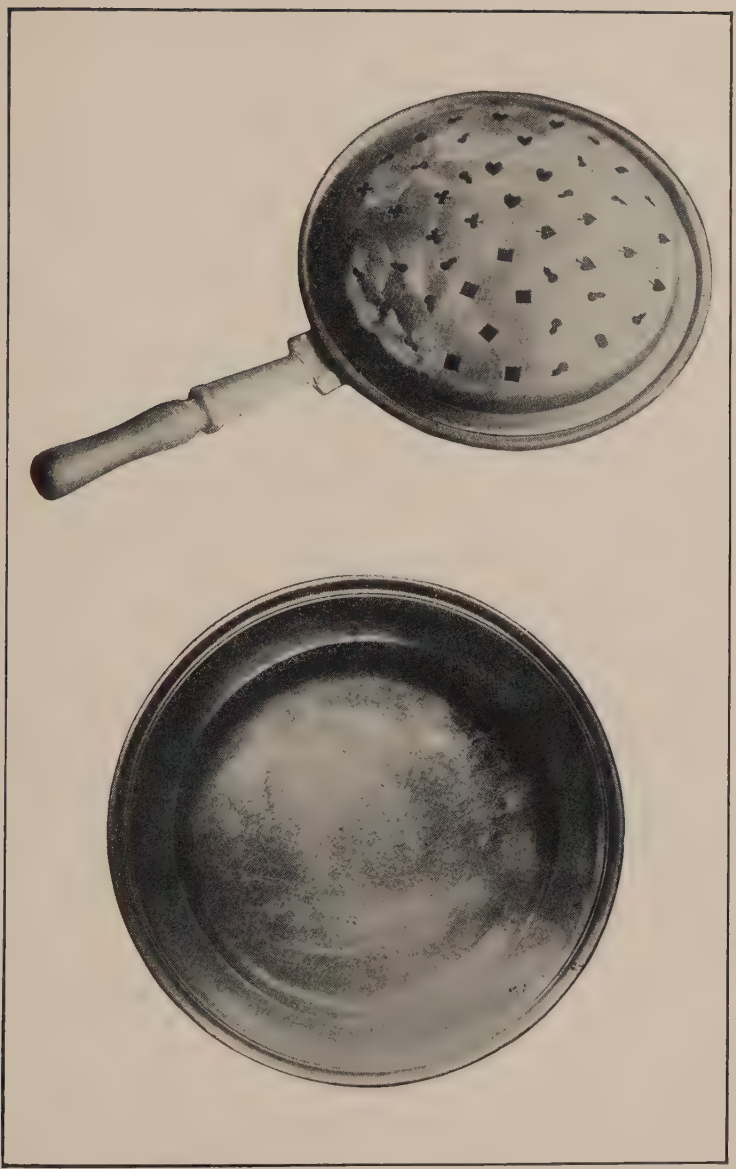
the simple word *Aveu* written below it — a declaration which reveals the devotion of the gentleman who first sent it, and mine now as it goes to you.[1]

And I must not forget my silhouettes, bought on the rue de Rennes, nor my pewter plate, found at the rue du Vieux Colombier — such a pretty name,

The small and sentimental box of thuya wood lined with tortoise-shell

for it means the street of the Old Dove-Cote. (Don't be puzzled, Isabel; all these streets form a network easy to unravel; it 's really not tiring to walk about them, if you don't do too much of it.) The plate, nine inches in diameter, of a fine clear color, slightly hollowed and well hall-marked, cost thirty-five francs, and I bought it from one of the oddest old ladies imaginable. She is certainly the great character of

[1] On mature consideration, I am convinced that this little box is a bonbonnière rather than a boîte à mouches, since the costume of the lady would indicate that patches, as an aid to loveliness, had been abandoned for a generation.



The card-cut *bassinoire* with an appealing design of hearts and spades and clubs and diamonds; and the pewter plate, slightly hollowed and well hall-marked, which I bought from the great character of the antique quarter

the antique-quarter, and she has been compared by some journalist or other to Little Nell, along in years. But indeed she 's not like that; she 's far more like the Marchioness — not at all gentle, but very lively, and with a spice of *malice* in her make-up.

You can find almost anything in her dark, too-crowded rooms, and her prices fall in proportion to your unwillingness to buy.

The silhouettes came from a shop of dignity, where military rarities and really fine bibelots chiefly are for sale. Rather larger than my other shades, cut from glossy black paper and mounted on white backgrounds, they are the early-nineteenth-century shadow-portraits of a worthy citizen and his good lady, and the oval, slightly chiseled gilt frames will be lovely when I have had time to rub them up a bit. The pair rank very high in my collecting affections; they are cut not only with finesse but with real humor, and I always imagine the couple seated facing each other at a long-ago tea-table, the gentleman chiding his spouse for the frivolity of her ribbons. And they were just thirty francs — less than I have frequently paid for single profiles in the country at home. There is no doubt that silhouettes are, as all the dealers tell you, "très, très rare." But that I expected; Mrs. Nevil-Jackson in her *History of Silhouettes* says that they are extremely difficult to find in France. Still, it does seem strange that here in Paris where Étienne de Silhouette preached his doctrines of economy,

reproached the *gaspillage* of Louis Fifteenth's prodigal court, and for his prudent pains found himself discredited and his name given lightly to all trifling things, my dear shadows of the past should be so undiscoverable.

These are all my purchases as yet. Quite good, though, for the first week on a foreign shore, don't you think? So far, the pressed glass has been a disappointment — heavy and much less beautiful than our early Sandwich. Occasionally you see rather clumsy goblets exalted by the dealers as "Louis Philippe" or "Charles Dix," but, wander as I will, not a solitary cup-plate. The lustre, for the most part, is inferior — of that muddy chocolate color which with us means reproduction. As for the furniture, well, of course I don't think most French pieces are suited to American houses; the elaborate designs certainly not. But I have seen some charming slat-back armchairs with rush seats, in type very much like the one in Chardin's beautiful *Bénédicité*. These average from ten to fifteen dollars apiece and they would be lovely and simple for any country home. I dare say they 'd be cheaper, too, in the provinces; anyhow I shall look in Touraine and Brittany. I found also five delightful Empire chairs, all for about seven dollars each: two with delicate marquetry, the other three lingeringly reminiscent of Louis Seize; the backs have that crosspiece design that you sometimes see in Sheraton chairs, and

The gentleman who might have been a friend of Lafayette; and my first *églomisée* silhouette, a lovely black-and-gold Empire lady

Portrait by David in the Louvre

The captivating Madame Sériziat

Sheraton, you recall, was "Louis Seize à l'Anglaise." Would you like one? I can be most generous, since, to my sorrow, I have n't a corner left.

Adieu, Isabel! The Seine continues to rise, the Ruhr invasion to go on, and still Paris seems busy and happy and undisturbed. Ah, it is an adorable city! I go now to the Louvre to pay my respects to the captivating Madame Sériziat.

Yours with an antique affection,

ALICE

II

PARISIAN FAIRS

Friday, March 23, 1923

My dear Louise:—

Don't buy any more candlesticks, and don't spend any more money! Unaccustomed advice from me, I know — but my dear, I have been to the Marché aux Puces, and I have come back laden with treasures: candlesticks and candlesticks such as we never seem to find at home any more. I so much wish that we were to be in Paris together; you are one of the few robust antique-ing spirits who would be hardy enough to brave with me the dirt and the crowd and the noise of this most interesting conglomeration of humanity — this Babel that is translated sometimes as "Rag," sometimes as "Junk" Fair. Actually it means "Flea Fair" — a name which does it no injustice, I assure you.

But since we cannot go together upon this joyous adventure, I might as well tell you just how to get there; for famous as it is, a great many Parisians have only a hazy idea of its whereabouts, and even the collecting friend who finally directed me sent me a-wandering way to the Porte St.-Ouen, when it really is out on the old, old ramparts at one end of

Montmartre, at the Porte de Clignancourt. The simplest way is to take the Métro, and go straight out to Clignancourt, as far as the line runs. Then you 're there. You 'll walk through a preliminary space of merry-go-rounds and swings and fortune-teller booths, and suddenly you 'll see the fair spread before you. Acres and acres it covers; it must be four or five times as large as our campus, and you have to thread an intricate path between heaps of discarded clothing and piles of old shoes and barrows of new cloth and faded ancient books, and — everything. Without exaggeration, at the Marché aux Puces you can buy any article, from an old bureau to a new button. At its edges are the more pretentious stands where the venders sell shoestrings and stockings and neckties, and these you can pass by quickly, but once inside, stop and examine each heap. Treasures may be there for your finding. And now, having told you how to go, let me add when. Three days each week the fair is held: Saturday, Sunday, and Monday; and Sunday is far and away the best time, for on Saturday morning the stands are being arranged and the wares brought in, and on Monday afternoon the people begin packing up again; but on Sunday everything is in full swing, and experience has taught me that it pays to go early. That 's the way Orde and I did: we were there at ten o'clock.

Never shall I forget my first thrill. I have always maintained that collecting is the one respectable

form of gambling, and the sight of that immense field of tangled possibilities exhilarated me; I began to run and run, just as R—— does, you know, when he nears an auction. I had the awful sensation that somehow everybody was going to get there ahead of me and dash away with all my cherished desires. You 'll feel just the same way; it 's inevitable to a true collector; but, Louise, cultivate restraint. Don't buy the first things in sight; look further; search and search. At the beginning-pile, Orde had to keep me forcibly from purchasing a wretched wobbly candlestick for five francs just because it was the first one I beheld. I followed his advice, with the result that I found three candlesticks: two brass and one pewter, — much rarer, of course — for three francs and two francs and a franc-and-a-half. And I could have bought more, but — can you believe it — after a time I grew blasé, critical. There were so many! The best chances for bargains come at little stands and piles lying on the ground, because, when dealers gather their wares together and clean them carefully, making a brave and glittering show of copper and brass, why, then prices rise accordingly. There are some such knowledgeable stands at the Marché, where they charge more for warming-pans and candlesticks than they do at my nice little shop on the rue de Vaugirard.

But the really great experience of that first day was the *cave à liqueurs* that Orde stumbled upon.

The best chances for bargains come at little stands and piles lying on the ground

The really great experience of that first day was the *cave à liqueurs* Orde stumbled upon (above); but the climax of the whole Fair for me was my lovely lacquered and brass-inlaid *boîte à thé*

Literally, for there it was at the edge of a pile of rubbish, its pretty, round, ebony feet set firmly in the mud, and Orde — you know he has never before been anything of a collector — bought it upon my admiring advice, for thirty francs. The picture does not in the least reveal its excellence; time has so gently toned it that it is impossible to reproduce all its soft and lovely glow. A student who was stooping over the pile, picking up chemistry books, told us that it was made of thuya wood, "un bois des Isles, monsieur," — ah, that romantic phrase "des Isles," — and the dictionary defines it as a sort of cedar. But if you can imagine a very fine bird's-eye maple, only a deep golden brown, you will get some idea of its color-value. The front curves a little like a serpentine bureau, and it is about thirteen inches long, ten wide, and ten and a half high. And a great deal of its beauty comes from the inlay: marquetry of satinwood and ebony, and charming baskets of mother-of-pearl and metal on the front and top. The sides and the front are bound with bands of brass, and within, a gilt receptacle holds six tiny flowered liqueur-glasses and two old decanters. There should be just as many more, but finding them will be a pleasant occupation, a labor I delight in. Still, how on earth am I ever to fill them? I have a notion of learning to make cowslip wine; its amber hues, I feel, would well become their sprigged beauty. It 's really this liqueur-box which makes me urge you

not to go by the Porte St.-Ouen, for that means a long walk. Orde did n't dare to put the box down for a moment; he carried it all over the fair and all the way down to the Métro, and he declares that his arm is just beginning to get back into its original shape.

Oh, there is so much to tell you! Of course I went back and went back — five times altogether: with the girls, once with Marie, another time with some of the students from the Parsons School, while my last visit was paid with Mrs. S——, a recent collecting-acquaintance who had met me here and there in print, and who says she has wanted to go antique-ing with me ever since. Odd, was n't it, coming together way over in Paris, and then going companionably to the Marché aux Puces?

Always there is something new and different and interesting. Alicia picked up an excellent pewter inkstand for a franc and a half, and we bought quantities of candlesticks; these that I show you are just some of them. The highest price I paid was five francs for that tallest one. It is heavy and well shaped, but not so rare as the one next to it, which Mrs. S—— bought. That is Norman, and I want you to look closely at the little flattened slide, for I have never seen another like it. I am hoping to find another somewhat resembling it in Rouen.

And I am very proud of my three-franc pewter candlestick, the one with the saucer-base and sliding

Four dome-foot candlesticks from the *Marché aux Puces*. The one with the flattened slide is Norman

Four brass saucer-candlesticks averaging, perhaps, two francs apiece

button, for they are rare, as I said, and this one is sturdy and most domestic-looking. And notice, please, the pretty little pewter ladle. If you could turn it over you would see that it has the long and revealing rat-tail, always an indication of age. The color is fine and silvery; there must be a large proportion of tin in the alloy, although the ladle is quite heavy. I was attracted by the shape as it lay there on the ground among a pile of uninteresting modern forks and spoons, and I bought it for a franc. When I had a chance to examine it I found two dates engraved on the handle: first 1798, below that 1898, the upper figures being in an older method of cutting. Just think! It had lived over a hundred years in one appreciative family, and then, by some mischance, had been turned out in the cold world, and sold for junk — for a few centimes, no doubt, since it came to me for so very little.

But more than anything else I know you will appreciate the glad Adventure of the Cup-plate. You know — or did I write you — that I have searched Paris in vain for them? Every dealer who seemed to understand what they were, told me that, like silhouettes, they were "très, très rare," and I had begun to despair, for, after all, the French are n't a tea-drinking nation and they may not have had the gentle custom of pouring their coffee into saucers to cool. Well — but before I begin my story let me tell you of a game worth playing as a preparation

for Paris. It is one which we enjoyed in the days of our youth, and it is called, I believe, "Observation." You go into a room and look hard at a table covered with all kinds of different objects, and then you go out and write down the name of everything you can recall. I think it must have sharpened my wits; otherwise how could I have so quickly noticed among all the rag, tag, and bobtail, again flat on the ground, this little *mignonne* cup-plate? I suppose it would be more romantic if I could tell you it was an octagonal Washington or a large Henry Clay, but sincerity compels me to confess that it was just one of the pretty formalized floral patterns, very clear and quite perfect. And it cost me all of a franc! But I paid only half as much for a pressed-glass honey-plate, a trifle smaller, which Alicia discovered a few stalls further down. This one has an engaging openwork border, and when, for a franc and a half, I had added to my collection two small double saltcellars — about 1840, I should say — and a glass vase, fine-ringed and adorned with bunches of flowers, for five francs more, I felt that I had spent a most profitable morning, especially since all pressed glass in the Paris shops is apt to be heavy and expensive and rather clumsy.

Still, the climax of the whole Marché for me is my lovely *boîte à thé*. How shall I make you see it, this miracle of color that is my dear box? It is, in the first place, curved like a miniature serpentine bureau;

Three pewter candlesticks and the little rat-tailed ladle

the wood is ebony, and, patterning itself upon a memory of Boulle, the surface, except for a narrow, brass-bound base, has been delicately lacquered with softly dappled red and then inlaid — really almost encrusted — with charming arabesques of brass. The top is brass-bound also, and only a French workman would so meticulously have placed the lock that the effect of the design remains unbroken. Inside are two silvered receptacles, and the covers are inlaid with narrow lines of brass. A little bit, just under the cover and quite at the side, is missing. This is its only real flaw, and I am now diligently searching for some skilful *ébéniste* who can repair it for me after the old method. All this eighteenth-century beauty became mine for just thirty-five francs: the greatest bargain, of course; for a friend of Mrs. S—— was asked two hundred and fifty for a similar piece at an antiquity shop. And I bought it at the most expensive booth at the Marché, a stand that is almost a shop, and where really interesting things like lustre pitchers and fine bits of copper and brass are often to be found. The proprietor has a little house and a garden just back of it; indeed, there are a number of such little *chaumières* on the outskirts of the Fair.

I have been presenting the Marché aux Puces to you only from the side of its collecting-interests, which are just a small, small part of it. It really is the place where poor Paris comes to buy its necessities: its cloth, its lingerie, its new shoes and its

leather to mend old ones, its pots and pans and china and alarm clocks. It is a lesson in how the other half lives, and I grow ashamed of waste every time I go there. Things that we throw away in America are used and re-used here. Your purchase may be handed to you wrapped in a gay bit torn from a discarded roll of wall-paper, and they make thrifty bags from newspapers. But that 's very French; once, even in a quite good fruit-shop, the pears we had bought were carefully placed in a large envelope which we discovered, when we reached home, had been fashioned from a most interesting account of Madame de Staël's *salon*.

Still, in spite of general poverty — for you 'll meet only a very few prowling collectors or dealers — it 's a gay and good-natured crowd. You 'll grow used to the cries of the venders: "Voyez, voyez, mes enfants! Je vends pas cher!" or, "Mesdames! Faites vos choix!"; to jokes and bantering; or to some *marchand de friperies* who has been in New York — a Mecca! — and who wants dreadfully to talk English to you. And there are touching things, too. In the midst of all this dirt and noise and confusion sometimes you 'll see a man with a basket of pansies, and poorly-clad people stopping to buy their purple fragrance. Where else but in Paris could that happen? Or you 'll pause beside a pile of old and outworn garments, and hear a young girl humming to herself, "Sur le pont d'Avignon," lilting and gay,

The cup-plate and honey-dish of pressed glass, which I picked up at a flat-on-the-ground booth in the *Marché aux Puces*

as only a French child, cradled to its cadences, ever could sing it.

You won't need a great deal of French for the Marché. In fact, you could manage it all on the immortal words of the Laird in *Trilby:* "Combien" and "Je prong." What you 'll want far more is a quick mathematical mind: an ability to understand that *cent sous* means five francs, *vingt sous*, one. For all the dealers give you their prices that way, and until I grew accustomed to the method, I had to do rapid-fire division. And some collectors will tell you to bargain, to beat them down, to offer them half. But in most cases you won't want to, any more than I did, for they are poor, so very poor, and a franc to them will mean so much more than it ever can to you! But I 'll admit it 's maddening, after you have just bought a beautiful brass candlestick for four francs, to have another vender ask you twelve for a battered, broken one, just because its desolate condition proves its antiquity. In that case you walk away in the dignified silence which better befits a foreigner than animated argument in an unknown tongue.

All this does n't mean that I don't counsel you to work hard over those grammars we left with you. I do; for a really adequate knowledge will increase your happiness a thousandfold. My fluency grows, although I would hardly yet speak of French as my mother tongue. I talk, but I do not converse; I say

"Pass me the bread, please," or, "It is very cold to-day," but *never anything that I really want to say.* And you know what I think words should be: swift, beautiful things, glowing jewels to string into a magic pattern. I try, of course; moreover, at present I am completing my education by a struggle with the Merovingian kings — unsuccessful so far, it 's true, but I solemnly vow that if ever I do overthrow this dynasty, I 'll lead them captive in rhymed chains — like "William the Norman and William his son," you know — so that future generations will not have to suffer from their tyranny, as I have.

Enough for to-night. But I am not going to close my letter. I am keeping it open till after the big *Foire aux Jambons* which takes place next week — Holy Week. They say there 's nothing like it in all Paris.

Saturday, March 31

There is n't! I, who write this to you, speak the truth, for I have been to the Foire four times, and I wish now that I had spent the whole week there. If anything, it is more fascinating than the Marché aux Puces, at least there is greater variety, though that has the advantage of being a permanent institution, while the Ham Fair, like Christmas, comes but once a year. Some savants trace its beginnings back to the days of Charles the Bald, *which* is the time of the

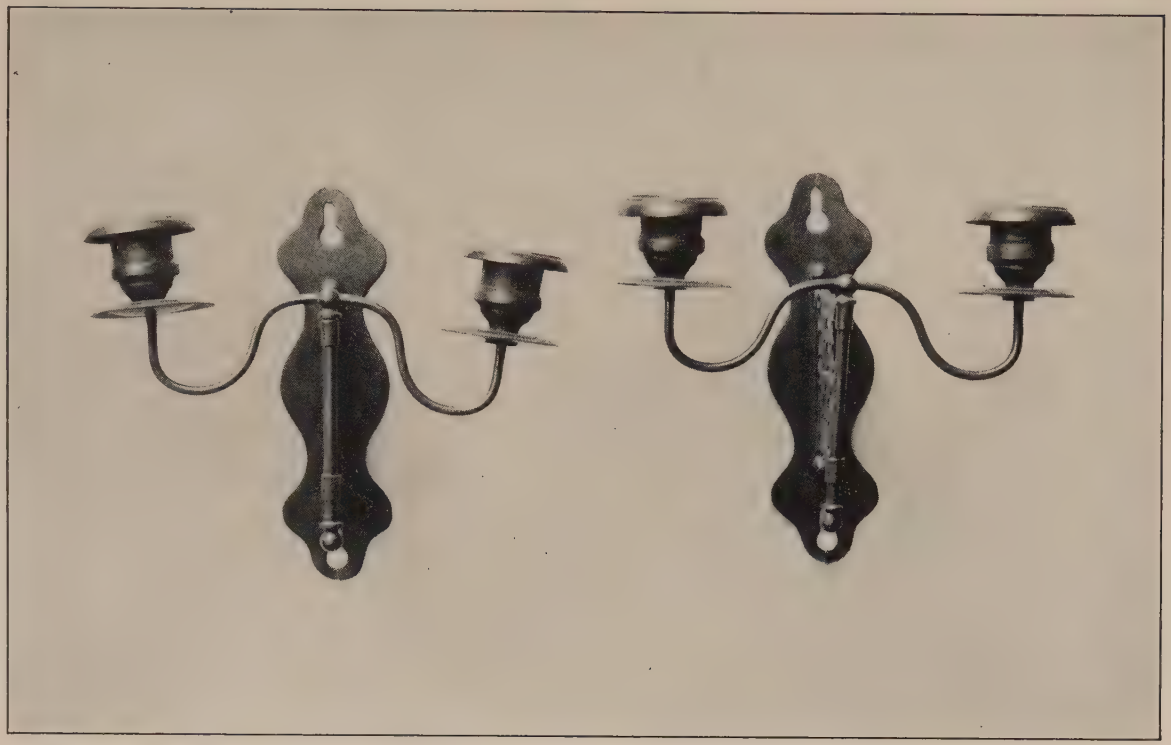
The Place de la Bastille, which marks the beginning of the Ham Fair

Strasbourg Oath, *which* took place in 842. (I *am* learning history, you see.) And while it is spoken of usually as La Foire aux Jambons, a much more important part, to a collector, is the adjoining *Foire aux Ferrailles* (Junk Fair). When you go, wear your oldest clothes and your most comfortable shoes, for you will have to walk and walk; the Fairs stretch from the Place de la Bastille down to the Boulevard Faubourg-du-Temple.

If you have only a little time to spend, go straight to the Métro station Richard Lenoir, although it is a most interesting study in human nature to begin at the Bastille, to pass by stands where you can purchase paper or lace or aprons or bright pink spun-sugar; to behold romantic, turreted backgrounds against which you may have your photograph taken riding on a stuffed donkey, — the Parisian equivalent of a Coney Island automobile, — or buy a gingerbread pig with your name written upon it in tiny colored confetti. It 's a standing joke in Paris to remark that even hams may be found at the Foire aux Jambons. I dare say there used to be more; however, plenty of placarded stalls greet you with, "À la renommée des saucissons d'Auvergne," "À la renommée des rillettes de Touraine"; then, quite at the end, a last little stand with the sign: "Ici pas de renommée — mais goûtez-moi ça!" (No renown here, but just taste that, will you?)

Indeed, I 'm not sure but that I 'd like to do my

marketing at the Fair, for the vegetables too are quite wonderful. The cauliflowers are huge white solid heads, often only a franc apiece. And I am very sure that if I were a beginning housekeeper I should go to the Foire aux Ferrailles for my furniture. Never again do I expect to have a Louis Seize mahogany card-table offered to me for sixty-five francs. Fancy! Even with the franc at its normal value, that is only thirteen dollars. Or an early-nineteenth-century *vaisselier* for a hundred and twenty-five. That would have looked charming ranged with old Strasbourg or Nevers ware, for I always think that walnut, in the gentle brown-gold color so common to France, has infinitely more soul than mahogany. Strange to say, I did n't buy any more candlesticks; they were there by battalions, but I had such a lot already, and then they were rather higher than at the Marché aux Puces. But I did get two very desirable pairs of sconces, rather like those I have on either side of the little Constitution mirror which hangs above my Hepplewhite tip-table. The first — a large double pair — I picked up at a flat-on-the-ground booth where there were old locks and keys and hinges and bolts, and a very jolly patron. All around him was a babel of bargaining, and he kept imploring his customers to allow him at least another sou for a cup of coffee. I did n't try to cheapen my purchase at all; four francs seemed so pathetically little, anyhow. The second pair came from another



A pair of double brass sconces bought from a jolly *marchand* at the *Foire aux Ferrailles*

junk-heap, and those are single and smaller and cost just half as much.

But don't think that everything is inexpensive at the Foire aux Ferrailles: I saw a pair of vases change hands for several hundred francs, and as for the silhouettes, why, I could n't hope to touch them. Even if I had wanted to, — which I did n't, for they were clumsily cut profiles, such as no self-respecting collector would ever hang upon her walls. French dealers as yet do not understand this delicate shadow-art; you 're quite apt to have an enormous bargain, some charmingly painted shade, offered you at the same price asked for a wretched scissorgraph that you 'd scorn to own.

There were many, many paintings too at the Fair, and these I scrutinized with attention — not that I am in any way a connoisseur, but because a most thrilling tale is told of a "find" at this very place. Years and years ago, when the classical school of David represented the consummation of taste, and Watteau was forgotten, — or, worse still, unfashionable, — his wonderful Gilles, which to-day so much delights us at the Louvre, was offered for sale at the Foire. For a long time it went a-begging, and at last the *brocanteur*, in desperation, chalked a couplet of a popular song upon the picture itself:—

Que Pierrot serait heureux
S'il pouvait vous plaire!

And then along came the predestined, discerning collector, and bought it for twenty dollars! That 's why I examined so meticulously a sixteenth-century lady whose portrait had been painted upon a small panel of wood, a panel no larger than five by seven inches, and intended, without doubt, to fit into the carved magnificence of some château wall. Still, she did n't fit into the simplicity of my little eighteenth-century cottage, and so I passed her by reluctantly. But do you suppose I was ignorantly refusing the portrait of a court lady, ordered by Francis the First from one of his Italian painters?

Never mind; I had a most compensating piece of good fortune. You, too. Let me tell you about it. You know the smaller dealers of Paris have a way of closing their shops for the week and bringing their wares to the Fair; it is an excellent advertisement for them, and it helps to get rid of reluctant antiquities as well. It was at the stall of a *marchande* from Batignolles that I saw my first really good piece of lustre, a sugar-box with delicate silver resist-bands against a creamy surface. I have no idea what price was asked for it at the beginning of the Fair, but on Thursday I bought it for ten francs. The dealer told me that she had refused thirty-five for it at Batignolles, and whether it is a superstition or not I don't know, but all these people seem to have a horror of taking anything back with them; collectors tell me that on the last afternoon things are absolutely given

Gilles: painting by Watteau, in the Louvre

Que Pierrot serait heureux
S'il pouvait vous plaire!

away. When it was put into my hands I gloated over it, for it really is very pretty and plumply engaging, six inches in height and almost as wide, but the more I looked at it, the more I saw it on the shelves of your Empire secretary, conversing amicably with its cousin, your great-grandmother's pitcher. I felt that it belonged to you.

A sugar-box with delicate silver resist-bands against a creamy surface

I was going straight home with it to put it in my armoire until it could be securely packed, but Orde met us and hurried us off to the Place Voltaire to see Sarah Bernhardt's magnificent funeral cortège. The throng had already begun to gather when we arrived, and we were fortunate to find a place anywhere near

the edge of the curbstone; I really felt grateful for being so tall. And there we stood for nearly two hours, I all the time clasping your cherished sugar-box to my breast with sheltering arms, for I was bound that no ill chance should befall it. But I was n't bored for one moment. I enjoyed the people so thoroughly. And yet it was just an everyday crowd from an everyday *arrondissement:* persistent old ladies who wanted to cross the street and insistent *sergents de ville* who would n't let them; men from the near-by cafés; a baker's boy with his arm round the waist of a pretty little *midinette;* street urchins; schoolboys; a little scuffling, a little argumentative, very good-humored and full of jokes. But as the stately retinue of the great woman who had given the world so much happiness came into sight, so swiftly reverent. "Ah, que des fleurs! Toutes, toutes blanches!" And all the hats were lifted instantly. Gavroche had thrown Bernhardt his last bouquet!

As we were whirled away in our taxi, I looked back at that long line of flowers marching, marching, and the misty green trees of Père-Lachaise massed against a springtime sky. Ah, if one had to die, it was such a beautiful day to be buried — the whole earth so soft and warm. I shall never forget it.

Since then, every second has been occupied. I have been so very busy that I have n't had the right kind of time to take your little lustre bit to a proper

emballeur. And as we leave Easter Monday for Touraine, I again shall bear it with me, but this time in my handbag. I hope to send it on from there, and when it does reach you, you must imagine it to be filled to the brim with the admiring good wishes of

Your affectionate

Friend in Collecting,

ALICE

III

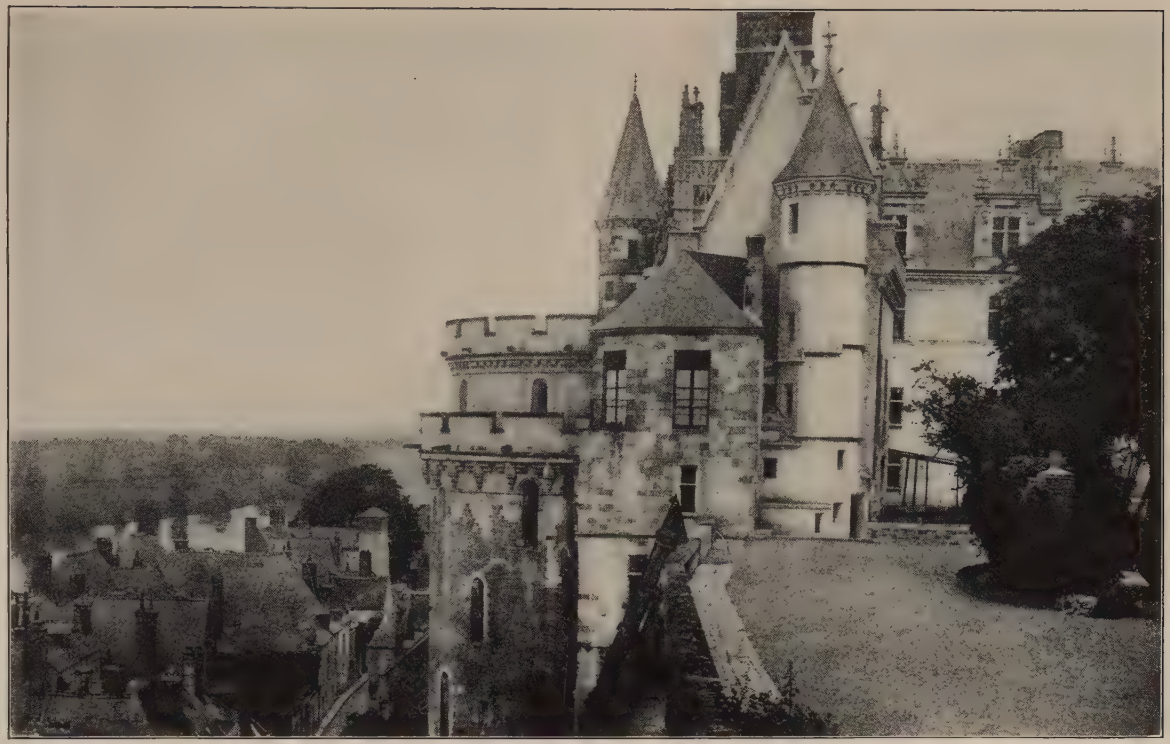
THE PLEASANT LAND OF FRANCE

May 21, 1923

MARIE, MY DEAR:—

WE are here in Touraine. In Touraine, where Saint Martin divided his cloak, and Charles Martel defeated the Moors! In Touraine, where the Middle Ages, deep-hued as their gold-and-blue *évangiles*, lie open before us, and the gorgeous pageantry of the Renaissance seems perpetually to be marching by! It 's all history; it 's all France! My eager typewriter persists in sprinkling exclamation points and italics over my pages, and I cannot restrain it. I warn you that this is going to be a long and enthusiastic letter; I want to talk to you, and I want you to listen to me. So put it down till the children have trotted off to school and Henry has gone to play tennis at Auteuil. I desire your undivided attention.

Our trip down was a pure pleasure; thirty miles out of Paris we forgot to regret it. The fruit trees were in bloom with their varying tints of pink and white, and the little clay-walled farmhouses began to draw themselves together into tiny hamlets as the train swept by. We were all admiration, it was so new to us, and I — as you will recall — am particularly impulsive. At Meung I lost all self-control, exclaimed — indeed, I 'm not sure but I screamed — "Oh, look! Look! Don't you remember? D'Artagnan!



Amboise, rising high and white above the Loire

It 's where he met the Man and Milady!" And Beaugency, which seemed dropped from some mediæval Heaven! How could we keep still? How could we be quiet? Well, we were n't. We dashed from one window to another, to the lively disconcertion of a French family traveling with us. "On passe, et passe, et repasse," they grumbled, deeming us, no doubt, mad Americans. We were. Wild with the joys of really seeing our first châteaux: the walls of Blois stretching stately before us, and Amboise rising high and white above the Loire.

We came to stay one month, you know, and now we are well along in our second, and I don't believe we 'll start for Brittany until full June. We are so comfortable here, en pension in the old Cathedral quarter; from our windows the pleasantest view of gardens with ivied walls, and roses clambering against them, and tall, tall trees, and, in the salle à manger, repasts that do not make us sigh for our native land. And peaceful! It 's as quiet as Hanover in vacation: quieter, in fact, for there are few disturbing motors. Just the crowing of cocks, and the bells from the Carmelite convent and the towers of St.-Gatien, to break the monotony every now and then and make you realize how completely tranquil it all is. When you come to Tours this summer, you must live here; you will love it as much as I do, I know. I want you to inherit our happiness, and besides, Mlle. S—— speaks a French so charmingly, so admirably phrased,

that to listen to her is like turning the pages of some interesting novel.

Do you wonder that we linger? When first we came, in Easter week, all the ancient gray houses of the Cathedral close, the high walls of the old garden of the archbishopric, even St.-Gatien itself, were tufted with yellowest *giroflées*, growing from seeds that some long-ago wind had planted in the crevices, I suppose, and lately these have given way to clusters of dusky-pink *lilas d'Espagne*, and a deep blue flower which resembles a wild larkspur. My dear, I have been like a starved city child, impatient to pick them all. Spring was very early this year, everybody says, and the meadows have been full of clovers and violets and dandelions and buttercups and wee crimson-tippèd daisies blossoming at the same time. Even small scarlet poppies. Think of that, when at home, at this season, I am usually engaged in scraping away the reluctant snow from the north side of the house to see if the first green shoots of the daffodils are beginning to peer. Think of white roses climbing up to my window and opening their creamy chalices for me in April! But now they are going by, and festoons of red roses star the vine-hung walls; the *cœur de Jeanette* — a much prettier name than "bleeding heart," I think — has faded, and so have the lilacs and wisteria. I am filled with regret that you will not see them as I did, because until you behold their fragrant lavender spires massed

The lovely Loire. It is here, on the Quai Poissonerie, that a junk-fair is held every May, during the *grande semaine*

together, you have no conception how lovely purples can be. The great horse-chestnut trees have lighted their pink and white candles, lighted them and blown them out again, and to-day the little green spiky balls are falling and covering the ground already drifted with acacia petals. Yes, Spring has almost passed; I can just catch the last flutter of her garments. But don't be sorry; you 'll be here in the summer, and Touraine always reaches out blossom-filled arms.

You 'd think from this that I 'd spent every day in sentimental botanizing, in gathering flowers. Ah, but I 've been gathering antiquities as well; picking up pretty and useful old things: glass and brass and heavy peasant linen and naïve faïence for very little — "pour un morceau de pain," as the old French saying goes. Still, is n't that just the equivalent of our English "for a song"? Little Tommy Tucker sang for his supper, and, if I remember rightly, it consisted of white bread and butter.

At first the antique-prices here staggered me; apparently the American soldiers bought lavishly and for absurd sums; in general the values are much higher than in Paris, certainly higher than in the Left Bank shops. Up and down the little rue de la Scellerie we went, — there must be at least ten *magasins d'antiquités* on this one small street, — and glass and faïence were very high and silhouettes absolutely unfindable. But on we walked, for I am

persistent and Orde is obliging. At last, on the Place Émile Zola, we saw a shop — the lower part of a house it was — so *chic* and with such charmingly arranged windows that I hesitated to enter. But there was a very engaging pressed-glass cup and saucer displayed on a square of old brocade, and we ventured in. I expected to be asked — well, maybe fifty francs, for some quite ordinary goblets in one of the shops had been twenty-five francs apiece; but, do you know, this delicate bit of lace-glass was only twelve! So you can't always tell from outward appearances. I have nothing like it in my collection, nor have I met anybody else lucky enough to have one. Louis Philippe it is, about the size of one of those graceful pink-lustre teacups, very fine, and with a decoration of acanthus leaves, small incised diamonds, and formalized flowers. It is a treasure, I assure you, and I carried it home walking on air in more ways than one, for I employed all the eager care of one who treads a tight rope. I wish I could find five more like it for an iced-tea service.

My next purchase was just as fortunate: two very lovable little *confiturières*, five-and-a-half inches tall and standing on small square diamond-pointed bases. Again these are unique, at least in my experience. The glass is admirably pressed, — I begin to think better of French glass, — the pattern, appropriately enough, conventionalized fleur-de-lis; and there is a little opening in each one just the size for a thin and

The Louis Philippe pressed-glass cup and saucer and the Empire *confiturières*

delicate silver spoon. I shall use them for my most precious preserves, with my creamy queens-ware set and my old cross-stitch napkins. Will you come and take tea with me? I paid only ten francs for the pair, to-day a matter of seventy-odd cents but — as I keep saying — a bargain even with a normal exchange; for five into ten goes twice, and two dollars for such prettiness is simply nothing at all. And I bought them at a tiny "shabby shop" way down on the rue du Grand Marché; for by this time I had begun to prowl and to do as I do in America, go to the places where the antique-dealers buy their wares.

Now that 's an interesting street, the rue du Grand Marché: not so old, perhaps, as the hills, but certainly as the fifteenth century, for it is the ancient Quartier St.-Martin. Near-by lived Jean Fouquet, court painter to Charles the Seventh, and so did Louis the Eleventh's dour Prime Minister, Tristan l'Ermite; you can visit his house to-day, and marvel at the winding brick stairway, the huge fireplaces, and the wonderful view from the tower across all the chimney-tops of Tours. Old houses, old houses, timbered, and slate-covered, and many-gabled! Did you know that this was formerly a sign of prosperity, and that they still say in Touraine to-day, "il a pignon sur rue" (he has a gable on the street), to indicate a well-to-do bourgeois? And, oh, the names of the little crooked lanes! You can reconstruct the past just from reading them: street of the Goldsmiths, street

of the Tanners, Crossbow street, Flower-basket street, street of the Gilded Scissors (about as wide as the palm of my hand), street of the Good Children. Alas, that the street of the Three Maidens — it sounds like a mediæval fairy-tale, does n't it? — should have been changed to the more prosaic name of the rue Briçonnet!

But to leave the past and come back to the present — on the rue du Grand Marché there is an excellent *brocanteur* (secondhand man) who has a house packed with things: rubbish for the most part, but occasionally you will find something quite worth-while. And there are two very good *fripiers* (junkmen), one just below, the other opposite my little "shabby shop." At the first I bought half a dozen silver spoons, old and slender, with narrow bowls and the little drop where bowl and handle meet, and which in the late eighteenth century replaced the rat-tail. For thirty francs I bought them, and when I remember that once, years ago, in Philadelphia, I found two for a dollar and a half apiece and all my friends exclaimed at my good luck, I think this time I made an even better bargain.

And at the across-the-street-shop I stumbled on a small gold-mine. The patronne, good woman, assured me that she had nothing at all that would interest me, but I politely persisted, and I found — oh, I found a delightful engraving of Lafayette framed in an oval of blue and gilt — imagine how

My six silver spoons, old and slender, and with the little drop where bowl and handle meet, which in the very late eighteenth century replaced the rat-tail

The old engraving of Lafayette, with an inner frame of gold-and-blue, that I picked up at a *fripier's* in Tours for fifty centimes

well it will look in my Hepplewhite bedroom — and with an outer binding of black passe-partout. This I shall have to replace because the glass is cracked, which seems a pity because the old passe-partout is always so interesting. That was half a franc; and for a whole one I found an odd little bowl, cream-colored and banded with silver lustre. I wish you could have seen it filled with tiny orange *soucis* (marigolds), Margaret of Navarre's favorite flowers, which I gathered in the fields of the Chenonceaux she knew and loved so much. A franc and a half bought an eighteenth-century drinking-glass, thick-based and pontil-marked, with fanciful engraved wreaths and festoons — a type which antique-dealers sell at twenty to thirty francs, according to the loftiness of their notions. And for four francs I purchased a candlestick to give C.C., because it is as fat and round and jolly-looking as he is.

I really did n't mean to mention candlesticks; my collecting friends must be horribly bored at my continuous raptures about them. But I just must tell this one story. I stopped at a grimy little shop on the rue du Grand Marché, near that beautiful Place Plumereau, and because the man looked so old and so poor I bought, for three francs, a candlestick which I did n't very much want. Instantly his selling instinct took fire. Here was an unbelievable customer, a woman who did not haggle, but who paid the first price demanded. Idly I picked up another,

very much like the one, you know, I got for five francs in the little shop on the rue de Vaugirard, and which the woman told us was "Louis Treize." "But, Madame," the old man insisted, "that one is forty francs because of its great age. It is of the days of Charles the Seventh." Forty francs! I could have bought a wilderness of candlesticks at the Rag Fair for all that money. I made him my compliments on its extreme antiquity, and put it carefully down. I had really thought that the early seventeenth century was quite a long while ago. But the fifteenth! Moreover, I am convinced that my beloved Jeanne d'Arc would have needed a far larger flame to light up the deep and shadowy walls of the old guardhouse at Chinon. Ah well, so much for legend, and the soaring impulse it gives to prices!

By the way, I no longer open my eyes wide in the same awed admiration of the sixteenth century that I did in Paris. Why, in Tours I can walk out and behold the twelfth any time I like: look at the round towers built by Henry Plantagenet, or at the tall gray gable of an ancient chapel in the Place St.-Gregoire de Tours. Always here there is the sense of time long past; to me it was encouragingly romantic to be recommended to a *remailleuse* — such an excellent one she is, able to mend a delicate silk stocking so that you cannot find the darn — whose shoplet was "en face de la Tour de Charlemagne, Madame." Actually the tower is n't so old as that; it has the

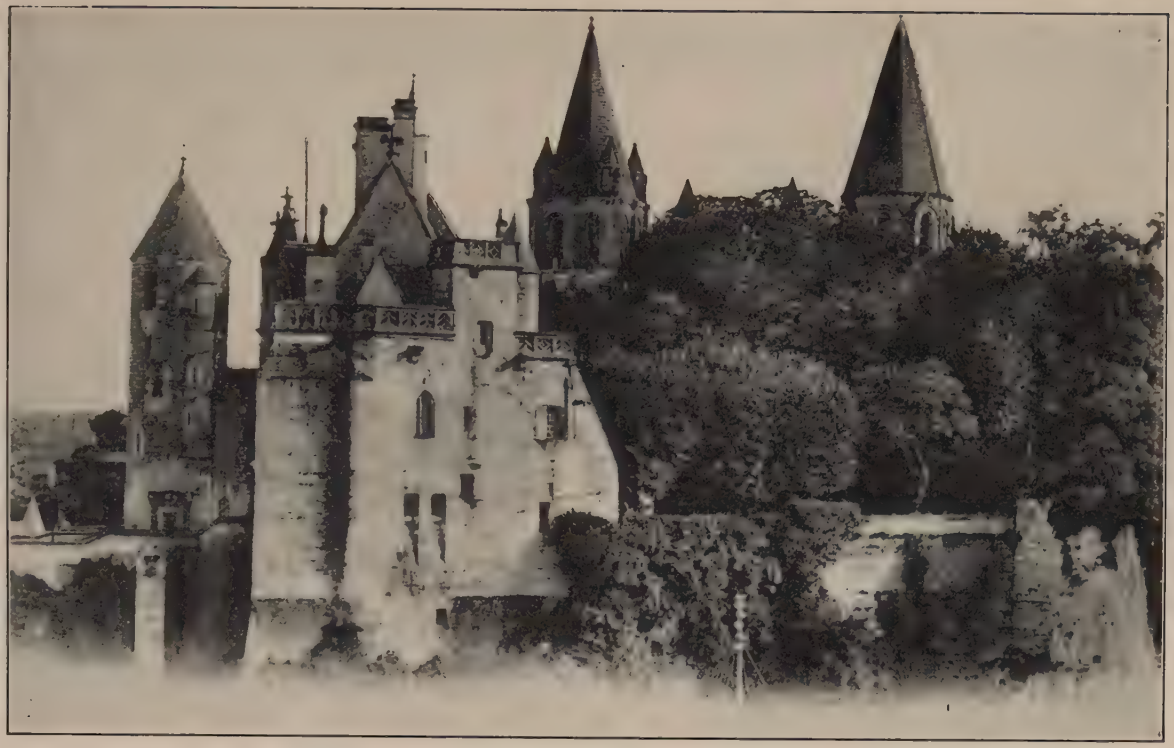
Fifteenth-century Tours lives again in the Place Plumereau. The gabled house on the corner is now an antiquity shop

effrontery to have been built as late as somewhere in the eleven-hundreds, and is so called only because it was erected over the tomb of Luitgarde, Great Charles's third wife.

And when you are down this way, you must be sure to stop at the little stalls in the neighborhood of the market. Every Wednesday and Saturday there is a fair, and while at first glance there does not seem to be very much, now and again you will pick up a bargain. I usually walk down the Boulevard Béranger because that 's where the *Marché aux Fleurs* is held: it 's such a constant happiness to regard those lovely masses of color; to buy, for a few francs, a great bunch of iris or peonies. Then I turn up the rue Chanoineau to the Place Gaston Pailhou, and, after I 've walked through a long, tented lane filled with booths where lace and cloth and lingerie and stockings and general small-wares are sold, I have reached my destination. One morning I bought a plate-warmer for two-and-a-half francs. It is made of brass, cut out — sides and top in a pretty pattern, while inside there is a small iron receptacle for charcoal. True, one of the wooden handles was missing, and it cost me four francs to have it replaced, but the cheapest of these old *chauffe-plats* in Paris was twenty-five francs, and it did not begin to be so charming as mine, which will be the nicest thing in the world to keep toast warm on a winter morning.

And there is a particularly nice old man, M.

Bonfils by name, who has a stall on the left-hand side of the market. From him I bought wonderful linen sheets, heavy and beautifully woven, for eight francs apiece, and one that had a "brack" in it he sold for six francs. Great, enormous things they are; even allowing for a few thin places I shall have enough for many luncheon-sets and table-runners. Besides, in America, it is only in the Pennsylvania Dutch country that you can find such linen to-day, and it is, of course, infinitely more expensive. Still, in spite of this happy experience, I connect M. Bonfils with a tragedy, one of those minor collecting-tragedies which befall every lover of old things. The first day I found out his stall, he had a very fine old warming-pan, copper with bands of brass, — that 's extremely rare, — and something else that I have seen just in France, a little metal button close to the handle, by which to lift up the lid. It was only twelve francs, but I had just a five-franc note — fool that I was not to leave that to bind the bargain! I told him that I 'd come back for it the next market-day. And that Wednesday, alas we walked to Plessis-les-Tours, Louis Eleventh's grim château, and pursued, I am convinced, by his malignant spirit, we were caught in the most frightful rain-storm, and, wet to the bone, had to hurry home and change. And then it was too late to go to the Marché, and when I returned on Saturday, some collectors from Paris had swooped down on my warming-pan and carried



Feudal Loches, one of the best of the chateau towns for antiquity shops

it off. There 's a whole collecting-moral in this simple tale. Never put off until to-morrow a purchase that you can possibly make to-day.

But then, I blame the rain, for I am rarely a laggard in my love — antique-ing. Ah, such rain as we have had! Showers and showers, and long gray days, and desolate evenings, when all you wanted to do was to follow Stendhal's advice: curl up by an open fire, light a myriad candles, and read the naïve legends of Saint Gregory of Tours. Yet you have n't been better off in Paris; every cinema I 've seen has shown all the street festivals forlornly dotted with glistening umbrellas. Everybody says, too, that autumn is the season for Touraine. And I know why. Once upon a time, long centuries ago, when Saint Martin was neither a bishop nor a saint, but only a simple Roman soldier, in November the weather used to be cold, freezing cold: snow and sleet as we know it nowadays in New England. So when, one bitter morning, he saw a poor faggot-gatherer, starved and shivering with the wind, Saint Martin cut his cape in two — slashed it with his soldier's sword — and gave half to the beggar. Ah, but the cape had not been his to bestow; and the Roman general, infuriated, ordered him for punishment to stand, without shelter or cloak, naked in the desolate courtyard. Then the bon Dieu, all compassion, looked down from Heaven, and miraculously the sky grew soft and blue, the wind gracious and warm; and

now every November, to greet the thronging pilgrims, comes Saint Martin's summer, in memory of the soldier-saint's gentle charity.

Of course we have had marvelous days of sunshine, also, and since I am incurably romantic, I cannot find it in my heart to regret the rain when I remember our first trip to Langeais, when I think of the view across a valley of lilacs, dripping sweetness, to Foulques Nerra's old donjon beyond, and the red and yellow gillyflowers, spangled with raindrops, nodding down at us from all the low roofs on the crooked little rue Jeanne d'Arc. Still there should be reason in everything; if it had n't poured torrents at Chinon, where the rains descended and the floods came, I might have discovered such charming things. For I have made it a custom everywhere I go to ask for antiquity shops, or, failing those, for brocanteurs. I found a fascinating shop at Loches, where for thirteen francs I bought four odd little faïence mugs, two cap-snuffers — and another "Charles the Seventh" candlestick. The mugs are really most engaging: a soft gray body with painted wreaths of flowers, and children's names printed upon them: "Georges" and "Louis" and two for "Laure."

Langeais has a brocanteur that you might keep in mind, — I 'll give you his name, — but at Chenonceaux, Chaumont, and Azay-le-Rideau I found nothing at all, although at Azay I saw such a darling little footstool that it set me searching in Tours,

A group from Loches: two faïence mugs, two cap snuffers, and a "Charles the Seventh" candlestick

The little crooked rue de Jeanne d'Arc, Langeais

where I finally found one on the rue de Commerce for twenty francs. It is oak, rather plain, with shapely baluster and pear legs, and a simply turned central stretcher: points which put it, as to type, toward the end of the seventeenth century. But in the provinces styles lingered on, and it may very well have been made in the eighteenth. I chose it in preference to an elaborately carved and "taffy-twisted" *banc*, not only because that was much more expensive, but also because it was the kind so frequently faked. And then the plainer one will better become my modest furniture, fall in more agreeably with my small North Country stenciled stool, and keep it company beside my friendly fireplace. It is the one bit of oak I intend ever to admit to Webster Cottage.

At Blois I found two quite excellent magasins d'antiquités up on the hill street which leads you past the Hôtel d'Alluie. At one I bought a pretty little pressed-glass plate, six inches in diameter, and with a braided border somewhat resembling those on the Bunker Hill cup-plates, and the finest old hand-wrought iron latch that I have seen for sale; and they were two francs and three francs respectively. But at the second shop I brought away nothing but a disappointment. A disappointment, because I could have bought a really beautiful walnut table for a hundred and fifty francs. This time I do believe it was late Louis Treize; it had the char-

acteristic legs and saltire brace of that epoch, a little like the later seventeenth-century style of William and Mary, for, of course, styles in furniture developed earlier on the Continent than in England. But I had n't a single place to put it; so — though it still haunts my memory — I am trying to forget its perfections.

But the blow at Amboise was even harder to bear. Here there are two antique-shops and one brocanteur, and it was in his crowded rooms that I discovered something I wanted, and something I had a place for, too: a massive eighteenth-century cherry-wood buffet. Just the thing for Orde's study: he constantly complains that the black linen-chest does n't allow him half room for his papers and pamphlets. I wanted terribly to give it to him for his birthday, but he would n't listen to me. It was only four hundred francs, about twenty-eight dollars with the favorable rate of exchange; and when I think of what I shall have to pay for the simplest highboy as a solution to that furniture problem —! Even if I can find one. And this buffet was lovely, *lovable:* a rich brown-gold like those old presses Albert Semain describes, dowered with memories and fragrant with the apples it has held. It had squat little Louis Quinze legs, a great cupboard below, while the upper press was lined with faded wall-paper patterned with mandarins and pagodas — all the *chinoiserie* of its time. I wanted it as I 've wanted nothing else that I 've

The footstool of oak, rather plain, with shapely baluster-and-pear legs,
and a simply turned central stretcher

The glass dish from Blois. It has a fine, silvery lustre: and notice, please, the braided border, so like the ones on our own Bunker Hill cup-plates

seen in France; wanted it more, I believe, than the pair of graceful walnut chairs for sale at a shop on the rue de la Scellerie. They are Dutch, with curving splat-backs and bending cabriole legs, and the seats are covered with tattered green brocade. I could get the pair for about forty dollars, but Orde is still obdurate and sternly forbids me to lay them at his feet. I am comparing myself favorably with the Patient Griselda, and wondering what good a husband's birthday does you, after all. Though, perhaps, he is right: they would n't fit in, and I really am trying to hold myself in check until I reach England and can find just the Hepplewhite chairs I need.

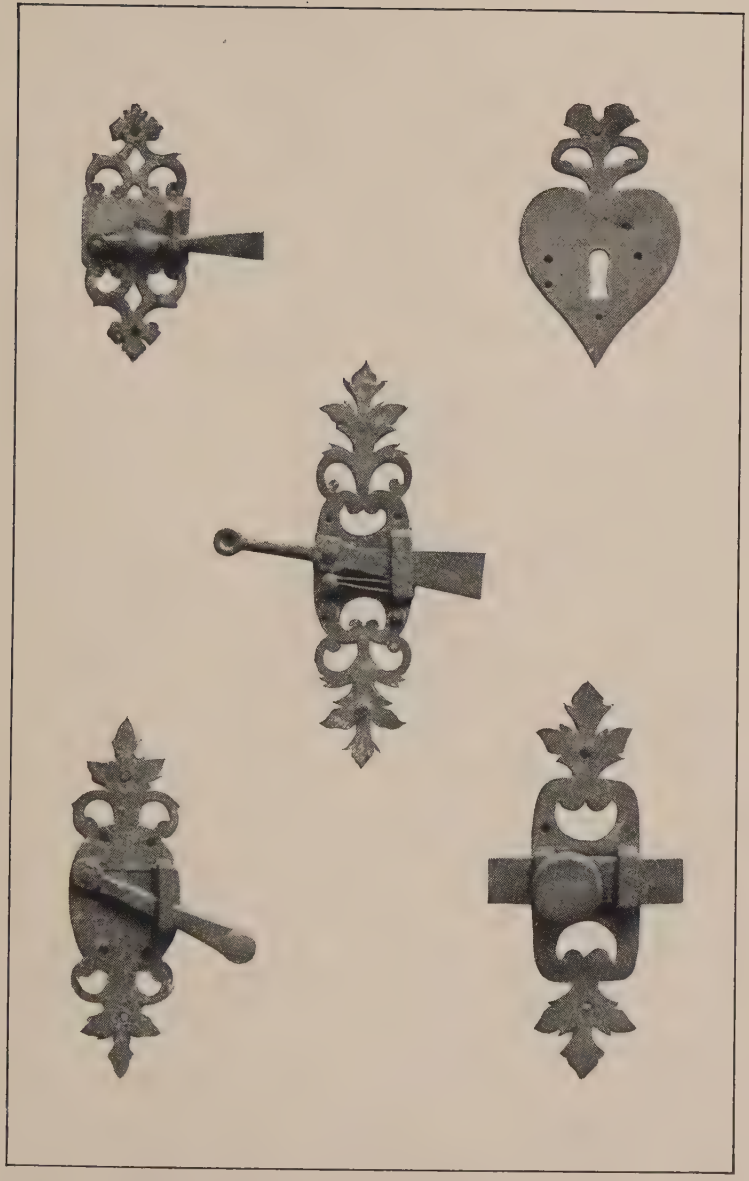
But I have fallen too deeply in love with French peasant furniture to do without it, and I confide to you my dearest plans. I mean to make my economies, buy an ancient turreted house here in Touraine, and fill it full of old armoires and buffets and chests and carved slat-back chairs. I mean to have a sweet-voiced Tourangelle with an embroidered cap for my capable *femme de ménage*, and a gardener in wide corduroys and clumping *sabots*,— I could get them both for what I 'd have to pay one inefficient servant in America,— a gay rose-garden circling round a rustic sundial, peacocks and fan-tailed pigeons, and a *charrette* with high blue wheels and a brisk little donkey to drag it for me. Dreams? No, my dear; it 's part of my simple faith that if you want anything

enough and in the right way, you 're bound to get it.

For you, with a new house to fill, Touraine ought to be the happiest of hunting-grounds. And even if you don't buy much furniture, do look about for the interesting old wrought-iron that the countryside abounds in. I fell in love with it first at Langeais and Chaumont, and while I do not mean to say that I have found anything like the latches with fleur-de-lis or the kingly knockers which adorn those magnificent châteaux, nevertheless, I have picked up here and there, at small antiquity shops and brocanteurs' and along the Quai Poissonerie — where, during the *grande semaine* of May, a junk-fair is always held — seventeen very good latches and bolts and two knockers. Most of them are for you, because I have always felt so sorry that your ancestral mansion was despoiled of all its old hardware, and I do believe that many of them would be very harmonious with the house that so soon you will be a-building. And do not despise my humble offering; although I bought all of mine for a little more than thirty francs, an expensive shop will charge from ten to thirty francs apiece for them according to their age and pattern. I just went to original sources, that 's all, for I never disdain to buy where dealers do.

Ah, Marie, come to Tours! I know that Henry is playing with the idea of Lausanne, but put it out of your heads; Switzerland can't be so lovely as Touraine. Every day is a fresh delight: whene'er

A sweet-voiced Tourangelle, with an embroidered cap



Old hand-wrought iron latches and bolts and locks,
picked up along the Quai Poissonerie

we take our walks abroad, how many joys we see! Glimpses as we pass by of a tranquil blue Virgin set against the ivy-grown walls of an old convent; a tapestry of roses flung over the trellises of the Archbishop's garden; and such throngs of ancient houses that we buy our little cakes in a one-time mansion of magnificence built by Thomas Bohier, treasurer to

An old yellow-and-brown bit of peasant ware; a *cruche à café* found at the Junk Fair for fifty centimes

Francis the First, and go to the cinema in the gorgeous shell of a seventeenth-century church. And always Saint Gatien, *my* cathedral, very little changed from the days when the poor little innocent-minded curé trotted in the rain across its cobblestoned cloisters and feared to wet his buckled shoes. I have the habit now of dropping in almost every time I pass, and resting a while in the jeweled dusk of windows colored long before Columbus even thought

of discovering America; of pausing to examine with careful affection the sacristy door carved with Gothic saints, and lingering to pay my reverence to the wistful little white tomb of Charles the Eighth's children.

Queen Mary's saying serves for me; open my heart and you will see graved inside of it — Touraine. Do hurry down to love and enjoy it all as we have.

Your affectionate friend,

ALICE

IV

LOITERING

PARIS, *Tuesday, July* 10, 1923

MY DEAR TERESA:—

I BELIEVE, honestly, that we are the most immovable family in the world! We are still in Paris weeks after we should have started for the coast; from day to day we plan to go on; then always some new and delightful reason appears and persuades us to remain. I meant to have written long ago, of course, but my days have been filled with busy idleness. Before we visited Paris; now we live here; there 's an enormous difference in just those two little phrases.

You know we left Touraine — for, anyhow, I *did* send you postcards — about the middle of June, and ever since then we have been established on the Left Bank, in the heart of the Latin Quarter. We are just opposite the lovely Luxembourg Gardens, only a short step down from the old Hôtel Corneille where Little Billee lived, you remember. We tried to get in there, but it was crowded, and we console ourselves with the knowledge that so we are rather nearer the rue de Seine where Taffy had his lodgings, and not far from that never-to-be-forgotten studio which stood on the Place St.-André-des-Arts (Place St.-Anatole-des-Arts). I am not only in the Latin Quarter, you see; I am also in the Trilby Quarter:

a sentimentally important fact to me, for *Trilby* is an early love and a late love, too, a book that I reread at least twice a year. Our hotel is antiquated but very agreeable, with great airy chambers, and even if a hero of romance did not dwell therein, it was in recompense once the home of a famous French critic, Jules Janin. (I wonder if living in a "tableted" house is a fate that is always to pursue me?)

When you come over I want you to be here, or at least as near the Luxembourg as we are. It is the most beautiful place: like Hierusalem in the old hymn, full of gardens and gallant walks that continually are green. And it has become a sort of floral calendar of our days; when we returned from Touraine, cotton-fluff from the catalpa trees was blowing about; this afternoon, as I write to you, great masses of snapdragons around the statues, and tall fuchsia bushes are in full flower, while marching rows of pink and maroon hollyhocks make me just a little homesick for a small white North Country cottage that I know. Apparently everybody loves it all as much as we do: students bring their books here, young girls write letters or sketch, and the alleys are gay with mothers who are making blue rompers for tiny things playing about in yellow ones. The Luxembourg is the Paradise for little children, for there are Punch-and-Judy shows and merry-go-rounds, and shops where hoops and whirligigs and bouncing balls can be bought. Do you know the very pleasantest

From the Koon Memorial Collection, Minneapolis Institute of Arts

The Luxembourg Gardens at Twilight, by John Singer Sargent

way to enjoy the Gardens — for an elderly person, I mean? It 's to walk through it all — and stop at everything — with the small soft hand of a little child tucked away confidingly in your own. Alicia begins to think herself a trifle old for such matters, and so I borrow Caroline M——. I don't think you know Caroline, but she is one of my greatest friends, and my neighbor at home in Hanover as she is here. Except for the curls, she is a replica of "Dimples," even to the stand-up bow on her Dutch-clipped hair, for she has round blue eyes and rosy round cheeks and fat, skippety legs. *And* a most obliging disposition, for she will let you swing her in the *balançoire* until her brain reels, and her enjoyment of the donkey-carts is so vast and solemn that a ride in one of them resembles a ritual.

Other pleasures there are, too. It has become a daily occupation with us to go out in the morning and feed the birds; to saunter out again after dinner and toss bits of bread to the hungry carp in the great central pond. I am growing very lazy, I own, but when we were here before I sight-saw — no, I don't like that phrase; I'll try another — I saw-sights so energetically that I was ready to drop at night. Now I sit in divine leisure, with a neglected book in my hand as an excuse, and observe the infinite small dramas of the earth: ants dragging away a weary load of crumbs that the birds have left; the sparrows, balancing and scolding at the fountain's edge, and

Fou-Fou, the T——s' irresponsible black cat, stalking birds with unavailing patience. A seat for twenty centimes is the least expensive happiness I know. Blonde and buxom Marie de Médicis has never been one of my favorite queens; rather my heart inclines to shrewd Anne of Brittany and luckless, lovely Marie Antoinette, but I do feel grateful to this Italian lady whenever I sit beside her magnificent fountain — far more beautiful now in its gray age than it ever could have been in the days of its youth. What joy she must have known in gazing at it from the windows of her charming painted bed-chamber, decorated by Rubens with a delicacy that I never before believed him to possess!

And so my days go by. I have become an idler, a loiterer, a despoiler of Time. Even my collecting shows what a *flâneuse* I have grown. I have spent hours and hours on the quais, always with pleasure, and occasionally with a great deal of profit. Beginning at the Carrousel bridge, — of course these Left Bank stalls run as far down the Seine as the Quai d'Orsay, — the farther up the river you go the better (and certainly the cheaper) the little booths become. It was just across from Notre Dame, under its gracious protection, that I bought one of my most valuable profiles. He 's worth looking at, is n't he? a most personable gentleman, "with as much whisker as a man might swear by," and a stock and buttoned coat which place him very early in the nineteenth

The gray old *Fontaine Médicis*, our rendezvous in the Luxembourg Gardens

century, about the decade of my cherished Governor Arnold, I should say. He is bound to be a much-traveled man; he began life in England, — for the stamp on the back of the frame reads, "Hill, Green & Co., Birmingham," and now he is journeying with me to America to join my other shadows of the past in the parlor bedroom. The profile is beautifully done: a soft pastel which reveals a mass of wavy brown hair, penciled eyebrows, and a trim blue coat with gold buttons. And the frame is excellent, also: pear-wood with a burnished inner rim and a gilt acorn and oak-leaves atop, very much like the ones which enclose my Miers silhouettes. But infinitely cheaper, for I gave only twenty-five francs for this, while my others were about ten times as much.

It was on the quais, too, that I found the "Cries of London" you wanted: not originals, naturally, for a careful investigation of reliable shops showed me that I would probably have to pay two thousand francs apiece for genuine Morlands and Wheatleys. But they are worthy reproductions, and, fittingly framed, they will look very attractive upon your parlor walls. Then, on my own account, I turned up two little color-prints to lay at your feet, the delightfulest things, I think. Because I had been such a good customer — with *your* money — the patron let me have them surprisingly cheap, thirty francs for the two. They are a pair: "*L'Entrée à l'École*" and "*La Sortie de l'École*" — ah, such prim and pretty

eighteenth-century schoolchildren! And I hope you will love them enough to have them framed in old gilt to hang over the Vermont "low-poster," for they have the same quality of engaging simplicity.

By the way, speaking of furniture, how, lacking my loving care, does your collection grow? I thought of you the other day when on the rue Jacob I found a very pleasing desk made of apple-wood and tinged by the passing of many years to soft golden brown tones. It had delicately curving legs, and a deep secret drawer, and with all these mobiliary virtues it was, nevertheless, modestly priced at about forty dollars. But experience has taught me by now that you have to be personally fitted to a desk, and since this one was in Paris, and you were way across the ocean in Boston, I said a sad good-bye to it, and passed on. It *was* a bargain!

To go back to the quais: I do wish that the many women who love old-fashioned prints, those devotees of *Godey's Lady's Book*, could shop along the river-bank with me; for most pretty pages are to be picked up for nothing at all: to be absolutely exact, for fifty centimes apiece. Sometimes, they even are only twenty-five, and they are generally, it seems to me, a little more desirable than those that we buy at home.

There are many other things for sale as well: old coins and medals which, mounted in rounds of polished black wood, make paper-weights of dignity; blue-and-white tiles from Holland; snuffers as cheap

A fine English colored profile, framed in pear-wood, which I picked up on the quais just across from Notre Dame; and my third *églomisé* silhouette. The touches of gold in the comb, the beads, and the earrings are meticulously fine

L'Entrée à l'École. A color print with such prim and pretty eighteenth-century children

as I bought them in Loches; and candlesticks and warming-pans, although these are apt to be higher than at the small Latin Quarter shops. And books and books and books: they are the principal industry of the quais. However, I know very little of first editions and I pray, that I never shall, but, instead, that I may be kept in wisdom's way; for I do not want my flesh any weaker, nor my purse any lighter than it is now. Rather I prefer to resemble myself to the man who did n't know much about music, but who knew what he liked. And the books that I like, the books that I *love*, should be bound in beaten gold!

Still, I delight in watching the people who do stop to buy them: young and old, rich and poor, everybody! And I never fail to enjoy the placid fishermen, those patient idlers who seem to be endlessly engaged in catching nothing at all. Unless, indeed, Time is the stream in which they go a-fishing! Besides, the Seine is always so lovely; not a vivid river of dancing blue like our Charles: even on the clearest day there is a hint of gray-green in her waters. But, proud lady, she wears the same glittering bridge-necklaces at night; more of them, glowing strands as far as the eye can reach against the rippled black silk of her gown. A little earlier, just before dusk, it is quite as beautiful, and sometimes we take one of those tiny *bateaux-mouches* which ply between Auteuil and Charenton, and go up the river far enough to look back at Notre Dame and my beloved Sainte Chapelle draw-

ing themselves up proudly against the sunset, a scene that has been painted again and again, and to which no picture ever does justice. Don't you think that you would like to *flâner* here with me?

It was on my return yesterday from one of these afternoon "quai-ing" trips, hurrying home to dinner by way of the rue de Tournon, that I found the French silhouette which stands highest of all in my collecting esteem. I suppose I must have passed the shop where I bought her at least half a hundred times on the bus — and never realized that she was there! Yet it is such a pretty shop, very deserving of notice: small, but well arranged, and full of desirable little things: bead purses and faïence and fans and *mille-fleur* paper-weights that are very fairly priced. I entered with that unfailing question on my lips, "Have you any silhouettes?" and I was bidden to look around and judge for myself. I did; and in a vitrine, in the midst of patch-boxes and laces and ivories, I found her. She is of the same genre and date as my black-and-gilt Empire lady, but very much more perfect. The years have laid but a gently detaining hand upon her; she is still as young and fair as on that day when first she clasped those golden beads around her slender throat. To study her through a reading-glass is a pure delight. The work is so meticulously fine, from her tall carved comb to the girdle which spans her high-waisted gown, that I tremble, every time I look at her, to

think I might have missed such loveliness. And when I remember what I paid, — forty francs, a mere fraction of her worth, — I thank my collecting stars that silhouettes have n't, as yet, become a collecting vogue in France.

À bientôt, Teresa! I am a loiterer even about letters these days; moreover, I have an urgent ren-

My rich reward for braving the intolerable heat, an eighteenth-century *églomisé* locket, a real treasure, and very rare

dezvous with Idleness in the Gardens. And to-morrow is also another day. Who knows what I may find to tell you about if I wait until then?

Thursday

Oh, the heat — the blinding, intolerable heat! I shan't write another word until it is over. Or stir a step out of my cool chamber, softly green with the sunlight which filters through the old *jalousies*.

Saturday

It's still hot and hot! The June heat-wave which engulfed you in America has swept across the ocean to France, and for a week we have been simmering; the only comfortable places I have found have been the shaded walks beside the Médicis fountain, and the Louvre. For I finally decided to brave the heat, and, leaving my cool seclusion, venture out once more upon my quests. I could n't let a little thing like temperature desolate Paris for me; besides, I remembered that if I were at home at this time, I'd probably be putting up strawberry-jam, and far less comfortable than I am here.

And my reward was immediate, an *églomisé* silhouette-locket that is a real treasure. Mr. H—— has one, a beautiful shadowy thing done by Miers in his earlier manner, and I dare say there are some in Mrs. W——'s large collection in Baltimore. But personally I know of no others in America, and they are rare enough in any country. It came from my discerning little shop; Madame, seeing my interest in such things, had saved it to show me. And it is just as characteristically fine and French as my captivating ladies, and like them, also, black against a background of gold. I have just been measuring it carefully for you. (Do you know that there are two things the careful collector should never travel without: a magnifying glass and a tape measure?) My locket is one and one-eighth inches wide, and a tiny

trifle over one and three-eighths inches long, and the gilded glass is set in a silver rim. But here 's the real joy of it all: it is an eighteenth-century piece, the earliest example of this method that I have ever seen. And its value is enhanced — not merely sentimentally — by the fact that there are two heads: a man's on one side, a woman's on the other. Her profile is aristocratically aquiline, and you can see that she wore her hair high and powdered, while his was tied in a queue. Again it is a pleasure to employ a reading-glass; to observe the ruffle at his throat and the infinitesimal buttons on his coat. I know you 'll agree with me that thirty francs for each head was very little to pay.

I am rewarded, too, in other ways; not tangible always, but daffodils for my heart to dance with when muddy March comes in, and there 's no place but the railroad tracks to walk. Now that I am used to it, I rather think I like Paris in the heat and the haze. Or, anyhow, it is more beautiful. Flower-stalls splash bright color along almost every street, and the blurred distances are lovely, lovely! I know that I prefer the Eiffel Tower, that divine Meccano, wrapped in a light veil of iridescent mist. And the other day, while I was searching for the antiquity-shop where the sweetheart of Tricotrin's temporary fancy "sat mending paled brocades," I found something else: Sacré-Cœur rising high and white before my eyes, and looking, in the quivering heat, very much

more like a bubble palace from the Arabian Nights than any Christian church.

The Louvre, though, has been my greatest recompense. Not that I did n't go there before — often — but in these hot days I live there! In Louis the Fourteenth's time, I believe, the poor folk used to huddle into its corridors to get warm. How they ever contrived it I can't imagine, for when I was here in March I used to wear my thickest coat, plus the sweater I take when I go snowshoeing, and even then I nearly froze to death. Now I, in the twentieth century, reverse the process: I go to the Louvre to keep cool. To step from the blazing Place du Carrousel into its lofty peace, its tranquil beauty, is the essence of happiness. The essence of education as well, for the collector without standards is lost, and I do not know a better way to set them — high! — than by constant visits to good museums.

But will you tell me why on earth guidebooks recommend travelers to save museums for rainy days? You need every bit of light you can get for proper seeing; in dull weather, in the Cluny especially, those beautiful ancient tapestries lose half their gentle color and the oak carvings are drowned in shadows. Here 's another question for you to answer, too. In this brazen weather, what perverted business instinct persuades *antiquaires* to fill their windows full of glittering candlesticks and burnished warming-pans? Oh yes, I can understand the candlesticks for the sake

My finest flip-glass, over five inches in height and beautifully etched, which I picked up, my last day in Paris, for only thirty francs

of the pure, translucent flames they bear; but bassinoires! When all you long for at night is cool fresh sheets! Still, I wonder if you could n't fill them with lumps of ice instead of coals, and freeze your bed o'nights?

Tuesday

Such a dillydallying letter as this one is! I am too indolent even to go out in the Gardens, too completely comfortable after my breakfast of chocolate and *croissants* and cherries to do anything but sit here in my pleasant room, and write to you. Gisèle, our pretty bonne, brings up the first two when we ring at about half-past eight, and we have fallen into the habit of carrying home big bags of cherries and strawberries at night to eat with our *petit déjeuner* the next morning.

We keep them in the cool of the evening out on our narrow window-ledge, — against the law, I know, — and we constantly pray that no frolicsome gust of wind shall toss them down on the heads of the sauntering sergents de ville, for, being in the neighborhood of the Sénat, we are always abundantly policed.

But think of buying a heaping quart of blackhearts, bursting with juice, for about ten cents! Strawberries, too, great sweet things, are only a little more; and flowers, not just roses, but the kind of old-fashioned blossoms that I begin to miss: larkspurs and bachelors' buttons and fat double marigolds are so

abundant that, for a few francs a week, I can keep our rooms fresh and blooming. How I am ever going to climb down from this lap of luxury I don't know.

Well — I 've found some more shops, and I 've had some more luck. Up in the old St.-Etienne district, back of the Panthéon, I discovered a little shop, oh, a tiny place, marked "*Occasions*," where there were many things well worth having, and reasonable in the extreme. Little things, naturally, for the space was not large enough to hold furniture; but there was copper and brass and glass, — blown, not pressed, — and pretty Empire vases of white-and-gold china. However, I did n't want any more candlesticks or another warming-pan, so I contented myself with buying squares of old rose-red damask — ancient chair-seats — for five francs apiece. I am always needing them, you know. These *Soldes-et-Occasions* (bargain shops) repay investigation; nearly always there is something within that interests the collector. They are in the poorer quarters for the most part, and their stock changes hands frequently, but it really is this very here-to-day-and-gone-to-morrow-ness which makes them such a happy hunting-ground. Often I 've seen pretty faïence plates for ten francs apiece, and — *malheur!* — once I just missed a pair of old silver sugar-tongs for twenty-five francs.

To go on with my purchases: I 've bought a pair of Strasbourg plates of the same type as mine at home, for I 've long since realized that none of my

A Strasbourg-ware plate, on which a little Chinaman sits placidly smoking beside a blue river and on very green grass; and the little *brasero* that some Picardy farmer, years ago, filled with red coals to light his pipe

collection ever came from the ateliers of the great Hannong, but that they probably are only a peasant-ware of *terre de pipe* made in the vicinity. Which in no way interferes with their charm, to my way of thinking, and these last are quite as agreeable as my others, although of a different design: on them a little Chinaman sits placidly smoking in the midst of an improbable landscape where the river is very blue and the grass is very green, and tall pink flowers grow on slender stalks — a color-note which serves to unite the rose of his coat with the hue adorning the edge. I confess I am fond of these plates, unpretentious as they are, and I am looking now for four more to go with them, though I doubt if I can find them so cheap — only twelve francs for each one.

I wish you were sitting here with me; even from my high window Paris is so interesting. An old *raccommodeur de faïence* has just passed down below, playing an airy, whimsical tune on a little flageolet — the traditional way of advertising his trade — and now he and his wife are sitting cross-legged on the pavement of the Sénat, mending pitchers and basins. This ancient rue de Vaugirard on which we live has been a highway ever since the Middle Ages, and as a settlement, I suppose it would go back way beyond that; only last week, workmen digging up the drains, farther on, found a Merovingian coffin of heavy lead. The street is old and gray and rather beautiful, and on still, clear nights, when the full

moon silvers all the tall chimney-pots of the Palais du Sénat, I love to lean out and look at the Carmelite convent, or picture Madame de Sévigné coming to call upon her very literary though less celebrated friend, Madame de La Fayette, whose *hôtel* was just a few doors away. And sometimes it 's so quiet that you can hear the cocks crowing — we have an enterprising neighbor who keeps both chickens and rabbits in a courtyard on the rue de Garancière; think of it in this crowded district! But usually it is a bustling place, thronged with busses and heavy drays and taxicabs and noisy with the little staccato automobile horns which make all Paris sound like an incipient Fourth of July.

You know the traffic system here is deplorable. Or, rather, there is n't any. To think that I ever dreaded crossing Fifth Avenue! There, at least, you can calculate death. Rousseau used to insist that Parisian cab-drivers were in conspiracy against him, and I assure you that matters have n't changed since his day. I 'm sure they plot against *my* life. The only way to enjoy taxis is to ride in them; they are so absurdly cheap that I believe you could drive all over the city for about ten francs.

I now descend into this maelstrom to purchase a gift for my Candid Friend: a little brazier that some Picardy farmer, years ago, filled with red coals to light his pipe. I 've been meaning to buy it ever since I first saw it, it 's so unique and simple and

altogether quaint, but I just did n't. Loitering, Teresa, is a most pernicious habit!

I bought the *brasero* — I 'm told that 's its proper name — and received a financial lesson at the same time. Before, when I priced it it was only twenty francs, and instead of going on to the Gardens I should have bought it then. To-day it was thirty-five, but since I was "une cliente," Madame let me have it for twenty-five. Certainly prices have gone up as the franc has gone down. Orde returned from the theatre the other evening with an amusing instance of this. He had gone with Margaret to *La Dame aux Camélias*, and when he came in he remarked, "There 's no doubt that prices have risen in Paris. Camille's debts to-night were just three times what they used to be." Perfectly logical, of course. How could this expensive siren be expected to live in guilty splendor to-day on the pittance Dumas allowed her in 1850?

Good-night. The journals, optimists as they always are, promise us a thunderstorm and cooler weather to follow. I hope it proves true; I want the right kind of energy for the Sébastopol Fair.

Saturday

The weather-man was not deceived: at midnight the storm burst, and now the air is cool, and little spattering showers come every now and then to make it cooler. And I have been to the Fair three times.

I was so afraid I was going to miss it; I had heard that it was held at Christmas only, from the eve of *Noël* to the *Jour de l'An.* But it comes twice a year, it seems: in summer from the ninth to the twenty-fourth of July. And always in the same place, for blocks and blocks on the left-hand side as you go down the Boulevard. St.-Denis will be the Métro station for you to stop at, and I give you my word that it 's well worth visiting; rather more selective than the Foire aux Ferrailles, although many of my old friends from that fascinating place were here, too. And from the quais and the Marché aux Puces as well, for there are certain small dealers who make it a practice to "follow the fair." I think I am like them, my heart so leaps up when I behold one upon the horizon; I am sure, in some earlier incarnation I must have worn spangled skirts and twirled a tambourine.

My only sorrow is that I did not go earlier: that I let an inconsiderable discomfort like ninety in the shade keep me away. Judging from the things I did find, the earlier bargains must have been wonderful. As it was, I bought a little triple-mould bit of glass — three dolphins holding up a small cup — for three francs: one for each dolphin, I suppose. Glass like this is bringing frantic prices in America; you remember, don't you, the awful sums asked nowadays for this particular design? Then at the same unpretentious stall I found a colored lithograph, the

Set in a wide mahogany frame, she is the sweetest lady

kind for which at the larger shops they want anywhere from thirty to fifty francs. Set in a wide mahogany frame, she is the sweetest lady, Louis-Philippe in date; and I think I shall hang her over the desk in the Prettiest Room, for her mauve gown shades softly into pink, her folded fichu and cap are a gentle cream, and her eyes are very blue — just the colors that make up the flowered wall-paper. Fancy! She was but six francs, and the artist friend with whom I was loitering along openly lamented his ill fortune at not having first perceived her. And I unearthed two more silhouettes: one for eight francs, a *découpure* of the eighteenth century framed in black passe-partout; the other half as much, and dated 1845; late, but a method hitherto unknown to me, since the profile was painted on a white card and then glazed with a transparent varnish as a protection.

And I could have bought many more things: for one, a fine large japanned tray, gilt-scrolled on the edge and set with mother-of-pearl; but it would have been hard to pack, and moreover, such trays, being early-Victorian, do not come within the hundred-years exemption of duty. Then there was a pair of bellows, cheap enough — just fifteen francs — but they were delightfully French, and too elaborate for my simple-minded fireplaces. And there was a really good mirror of the late seventeen-hundreds, with a small pastoral scene painted in the upper panel:

shabby, and needing to be re-gilded, but it was only ten dollars, and it tempted me terribly. It did not fall in with the needs of Webster Cottage, however, and I am relinquishing all such collecting vanities until the time when I buy my *villina* in Touraine. On that glad day I shall indulge myself.

Oh, I wish you were here with me! If only to sit on the *terrasse* of some café, listening to a super-Pop Concert, and watching the world go by. In the small space of time it takes you to sip one glass of coffee you can see so many types: officers, priests in long black *soutanes*, soldier schoolboys from St. Cyr, midinettes, students from the French colonies (at times, even, in native costume), and pretty ladies who, two generations ago, would have adorned the pages of Murger's *Vie de Bohême*. Or perhaps a *mariage* rides along and waves colored streamers at you; for the latest thing in some circles, it appears, is to charter a huge sightseeing car, and fill it full of the exuberant wedding-party. Or a strolling violinist will come by, squeaking a tune on his fiddle and holding out an humble cap for sous, and then suddenly astonish you by reciting beautifully a poem of Verlaine's.

For there is a Paris that is n't just Druot sales, or gowns from the rue de la Paix, or dinners at Voisin's. Here there is something for everybody, and that 's the magic of it all. I think I never saw a place where

A *découpure* of the eighteenth century, framed in black passe-partout

so many poor people were happy. It is the humanest city! I weep to think that I must journey on so soon.

Yours sincerely, very,

ALICE

P.S. I now can make out a laundry-list in French, shop intelligibly, register a letter, or go to the theatre with perfect pleasure. But upon my return you will find that I still speak an English pure and undefiled, and *quite* without accent.

V

THE ROAD BACK TO ROUEN

August 5, 1923

My *dear* Grace:—

The italics not only show my affection; they also reveal my enthusiasm. You know I promised you a letter from Brittany, because we both love the sea and the sands and rocks that lie along its blue edge. Well, here I am writing from Normandy; destiny was greater than my determination, and for me the road lay back to Rouen. We loitered so long in Paris — loving its every aspect, and, incidentally, waiting for John's school to be over — that all the agreeable lodgings were taken, since, in August, the *petit fonctionnaire* has a way of hurrying to these pleasant places to enjoy his vacation. Of course we could have gone to gorgeous tourist hotels, but, frankly, that suited neither our purse nor our inclinations.

I shall never, never regret it; the journey back was even more delightful than when we first went down; we exchanged promise for fulfillment: orchard trees all pink and white for yellowed harvest fields, and woods that were varied shades of green. Normandy is so beautiful, and Rouen — ah, Rouen! — is the most enchanting city I have ever beheld! Daily I wander in the fifteenth century until I have n't an adjective left in the world. And all of us adored it

at once, even John, who, after a week in Touraine, declared that "Tours was an interesting town, but not very snappy." As for myself, I mourned for Paris that first week in Touraine, and lamented Tours for a full fortnight once I had gone back to Paris; not that I am perverse; this is just to show the real affection I felt for both places. But to Rouen we gave our swift, ungrudging hearts.

Let me describe our lodgings. Some holiday or other is on, and, as if in vengeance for the Battle of Hastings, England is invading Normandy; the streets seem full of mild little clergymen pointing out churchly glories to tall and lanky sons in their teens. Everything but the finest rooms in the most grandiloquent hotels is taken, and here we are, tucked away in a tiny inn: a seventeenth-century structure erected round a wide, paved courtyard. The house must have been grandly built in its day; the tall trellis-work in the square old *cour* is gracefully elaborate, and our rooms — repaneled, no doubt, in the eighteenth century — are white and stately and beautifully conceived, and the old locks are very fine. But the parquetry floors, neatly joined and angled as to-day we find them in old Southern houses, have been so scrubbed by housewifely zeal that they have lost their lustrous polish, and all the lover of the past in me arises and longs to give back the vanished shine; to restore the house to its first perfection; to put just the right brocades at the windows and on

the chairs; and to raise the cuisine — already good — to a height of Norman excellence that would make it famous throughout France. So much for dreams! In the mean time, the furniture is n't bad. I have a turned-leg table and modest Louis-Philippe chairs in my room, while the girls admire the colored prettiness of two Empire bough-pots on their marble mantelpiece.

So, you see, for me the uses of adversity are very sweet indeed; the proprietor and his plump wife are kindness itself, the prices are most considerate of our already too-depleted pocket-book, and — best of all — we are just at one side of the old Cathedral. From my high courtyard room I feel as if I could reach out my hand and touch the tall Butter Tower, erected in the fifteenth century by the money paid for indulgences during Lent. (By the way, I may here remark that the good Rouennais are still fond of excellent food.) And early in the morning I am awakened by the most beautiful chimes. To-day I 'd have sworn they were playing the ancient tune of "Green-sleeves" — the one, you know, we sing on Christmas Eve for "What Child is this that, laid to rest —."

It is the most admirable of all cathedrals, I think; I do not wonder that artists so love to paint it. It is more beautiful than Chartres, more impressive than St.-Gatien, more human than Notre Dame. If faith removed mountains, it also built cathedrals.

The Rouen Cathedral, more beautiful than Chartres, more impressive than St.-Gatien, more human than Notre-Dame

I never before realized the aspiration and thanksgiving and sacrifice that went to the lifting of these mighty monuments of prayer, rich and poor alike giving themselves and their worldly goods together; I never before fully comprehended Huysmans when he wrote that a Gothic cathedral was "the flight of the soul." And every day, I see more and more what Villon meant in the touching prayer for his old mother: that the cathedrals were the open books of the poor and unlettered, where Paradise was painted with its harps and its lutes, and a vivid Hell gaped wide for sinners. They must have carved the dailiness of life as well, these skillful, forgotten craftsmen; Orde and I thrilled the other day when, over the left portal, high, high up, we discovered a noble family sitting at meat, with jugglers and dancers to amuse them, and even a little trained dog going through his naïve repertoire at one end of the hall.

Somebody or other has called Rouen the "museum city." It really should be known, too, as the "city of churches." In mediæval Germany people used to say of a prosperous man that his affairs went as well as those of *le bon Dieu* in France, and I'm sure they must have been thinking of Rouen when they said it. Walk where you will, you see gray stone lace pointing against a completely blue sky. My pious pilgrimages have been rewarded in other ways, too: a great many of the antiquity shops are near the churches, and I have found some delightful bits of

old Normandy to bring back with me. First, near St.-Laurent I discovered a little tumbled-together shop, — in a fifteenth-century timbered house, my dear, — and I bought a Mocha-ware mug to add to my collection. I have thirteen now, and I don't at all consider it an unlucky number. It is a soft creamy color, brown-banded at the top, with a spraying, tree-like decoration adorning the sides, and I

My thirteenth mug, not at all unlucky since it is a fine example of Mocha ware. Found near Saint Laurent, in a little tumbled-together shop in a fifteenth-century house

think it must have been intended for a child, because it is hardly more than two-and-a-half inches in height. I'm sure also that it must have strayed over from England, for it has that light weight and fine texture, so different from the ware made in imitation, a little later, in our own country.

This was five francs; and then for forty — which seems an awful lot, I know, but which amounted to less than two dollars and a half — I purchased a pair

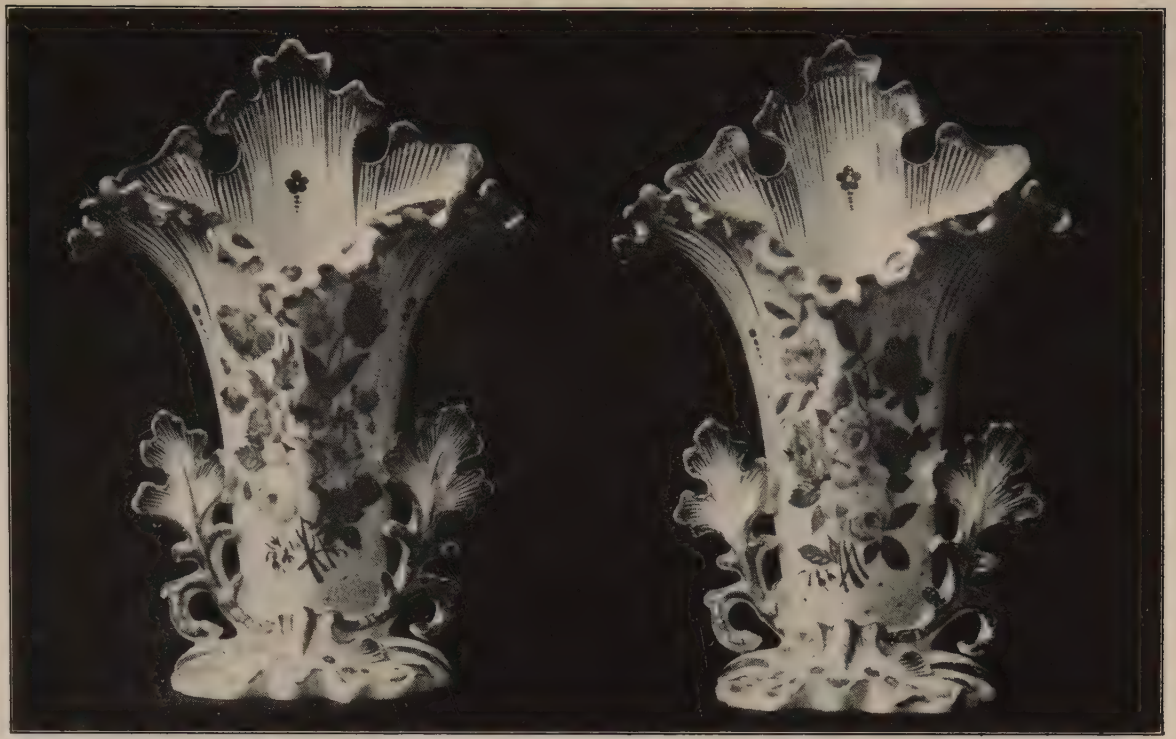
of Empire mantel-vases which are really and truly the loveliest I have ever seen. Years ago, when we first began housekeeping, part of my husband's dowry was a pair of vases of the same genre, and they sat in their gilt prettiness, adorning either end of my parlor mantel, until a too impetuous housemaid removed them on a dusting foray and they went the way of all china. Many times I have searched, hoping to replace them, and this is the first chance that 's ever come to me. And, in fulfillment of the benign law of compensation, they are a hundred times as captivating. They are taller, measuring nearly nine inches; charming acanthus leaves curve up at either side of the base, and the painted bouquets — which my others lacked — bloom as sweetly as if I had just gathered them from my old-fashioned garden. They are as gayly colored as my valentines, and once and for all, my mind is settled as to the origin of the finest of these vases which we pick up hereabouts. I know now that they came from France. Madame beamed at my raptures, and very graciously did *not* raise the price. She told me that they were intended for a *garniture de cheminée* under a framed bridal wreath. How nice! Ever so much pleasanter, don't you think, than the forlorn fashion of coffin-plates and funeral flowers which still grace our New England parlors?

But there is no doubt that the Cathedral Quarter is the best for antique and "shabby" shops and

brocanteurs; there must be nine or ten at least very near it. You could, if you were in the usual American hurry, visit the Cathedral, St.-Ouen, St.-Maclou and those wonderful cloisters just beyond, and buy a whole trunkful of antiquities, in the small space of one day. Which, of course, I hope you won't — it 's so much better to be leisurely; to linger, gazing with amazement at the macabre decorations of the timbered *aître;* to marvel at the carved doors of Jean Goujon; to pause a while in the holy magnificence of the great Cathedral, and watch the soft blues and roses of the thirteenth-century windows painting the marble effigy of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, whose body lies at Fontevrault but whose heart — as befitted a Duke of Normandy — is buried at Rouen. And then go out into the day again, and content your longing soul with more recent beauty: things made in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

I do wish people would n't hurry so through Rouen; it is n't a place for a day or two days, or even a week, but for months; and even then you would n't know it all. I have the feeling that if I could stretch myself three ways: make my purse fuller and my trunks emptier, lengthen my weeks into fortnights, — and many of them, — there is nothing, *nothing* I could not get.

Listen! At a brocanteur's, not more than a stone's throw from the Cathedral, I found two of the charmingest copper pieces for only fifteen francs apiece.



The *garniture de cheminée*, a charming pair of mantel vases, as gayly colored as my valentines

One — a small, squat teapot with a well-crooked iron handle and an inquisitive spout — is for you, because you 're so fond of teapots. Just think! In a very few weeks from now I myself shall present it for your — I hope — admiring approval. Still, afterward, if you decide that you prefer my card-cut bassinoire, why, you may have that instead. And the other piece, a little eighteenth-century *cruchon*, is for the T——s; they spent their honeymoon in Normandy, you know, and they are just as much attached to it as I am.

But I had a hard time making up my mind, for I discovered at another antiquity-shop two lovely blue Staffordshire bowls, — again fifteen francs, — and at first I thought I ought to give them those, for both of them — the T——s and the bowls, I mean — are such nicely matched pairs; but, after all, the T——s love France and the bowls are English; and that settled it. I think you will admire them as much as I do, — the bowls, of course; I seem to have mixed both couples hopelessly, — for age has creamed the paste almost to an écru, and the deep border of dark blue leaves and flowers is very pretty. From the design I should say that Stevenson had made them, but I have n't my Blue China book with me, and I don't like to be too positive. They are about the size of the Enoch Wood bowl on my dining-room mantel, and I think I shall enjoy them, turn and turn about. In the Japanese manner, you observe.

It 's strange how many English antiquities you find in Rouen — and yet, really, why should I be surprised? For Normandy is very near the English coast, with the Channel Islands for a go-between. Certainly I have found more lustre here than anywhere else: *terre de Jersey* they call it, and only the fact that all my bags are cram-jam full kept me from bringing back a pretty pink-sprigged sugar-bowl. But then I am not a lustre-collector, and it did n't go with a thing I have, and sensible "antiquers" always draw the line somewhere. I found glass salt-cellars, too, clearly of English origin; but they were rather battered and so I did n't get them, either.

About my snuffers and the little black japanned tray which holds them I am not so sure. Still, England was making and exporting quantities of such things in the early nineteenth century; judging from the *Columbian Centinel*, they must have arrived in America by boat-load: and I don't see why they should n't have gone to France, also. Mine I bought one day when Orde and I were wandering about the lower end of the town, back of St.-Ouen and St.-Maclou. That 's where you find the old streets: the little twisting rue du Petit Mouton and the *impasse* des Hautes Mariages looking, I am sure, very much as they must have appeared five or six centuries ago. We had gone down to see the rue de l'Eau de Robec, one of those ancient streets that have given Rouen the name of "the Venice of France"; for here the tall

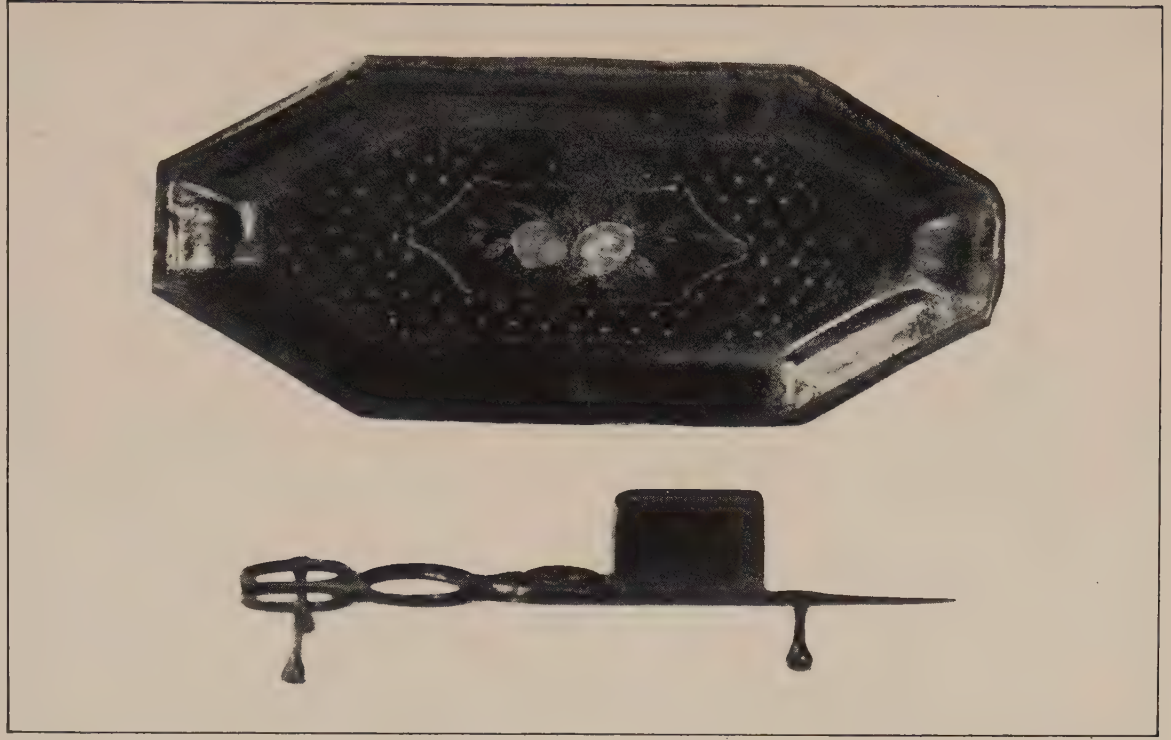
A small copper cruchon and a squat copper teapot with a well-crooked handle and an inquisitive spout

A pair of Staffordshire bowls, picked up in Rouen for fifteen francs. The paste is a creamy ecru and the deep border of dark blue flowers and leaves is very pretty

timbered houses overhang a small canal, and reflect themselves in the sluggish stream where very dirty little gamins sail paper boats. Age is its only virtue, and the Quartier Martainville has kept more of its former charm. Then we swung round by St.-Ouen, and on the rue St.-Vivien, quite near the street of the Abbé of the Sword, — I record this because it is so mindful of the days when the Church was the Church Militant, — I found a half-and-half shop — by which I mean that it lingered between a magasin d'antiquités and a brocanteur's display. Now, glancing at the card, I realize that the proprietor advertises himself as a buyer of unredeemed pawnbrokers' pledges — a very happy hunting-ground indeed. He had good metals: candlesticks, warming-pans, kettles, and strainers; oddly enough, copper in Normandy is much cheaper than brass; and I longed for — but did n't buy — some of the old and beautifully cut silver jewelry. Instead, I got my quaint stenciled snuffer-tray and the snuffers that went with it. Fifteen francs was its price; is n't it queer how my purchases run that way? At one time, in Paris, twenty-five seemed to be the standard. This one is a little different from any I have seen here: octagonal in shape, outlined with gold, then banded with vermilion, notes of color which meet again in the central design of fruit: diminutive peaches, picked out with bright green leaves.

Of course there are many other antique-shops;

the rue Beauvoisin, near that admirable Palais de Justice, is literally strewn with them. Indeed, I think the most interesting of them all is there — a great house stuffed with lovely things, quite as full as that huge place just across the river from us, only here you want everything, and there you don't. I could have bought for ten dollars apiece a very fine set of slat-back chairs with the turned leg which in France means the early nineteenth century; and when I tell you that there were ten of them, and that they all had excellently preserved rush-seats, you will understand what a bargain they were. And you must visit the little house on the Place de la Rougemare; it is centuries old, and the workman who lives there mends and refinishes furniture very well, besides having odd pieces always, and occasionally interesting little bibelots. There are steps up, and steps down, and low little doors where you bang your head if you are not careful, and a narrow, red-tiled doorway. Altogether it is charming, and, moreover, just across the way you will see the most beautiful mansion in all Rouen, and that 's high praise. Just on the corner, it stands where Richard the Fearless is said to have defeated Louis d'Outremer. I remember, when you were a small girl, you used to weep over *Elsie Dinsmore*, but I 'm not sure whether you loved and sorrowed over *The Little Duke* as I did. That 's why it made me absurdly happy to stand on the very spot where my childhood's hero triumphed



My stenciled snuffers-tray and the wrought-iron snuffers that go with it: another fifteen-franc purchase

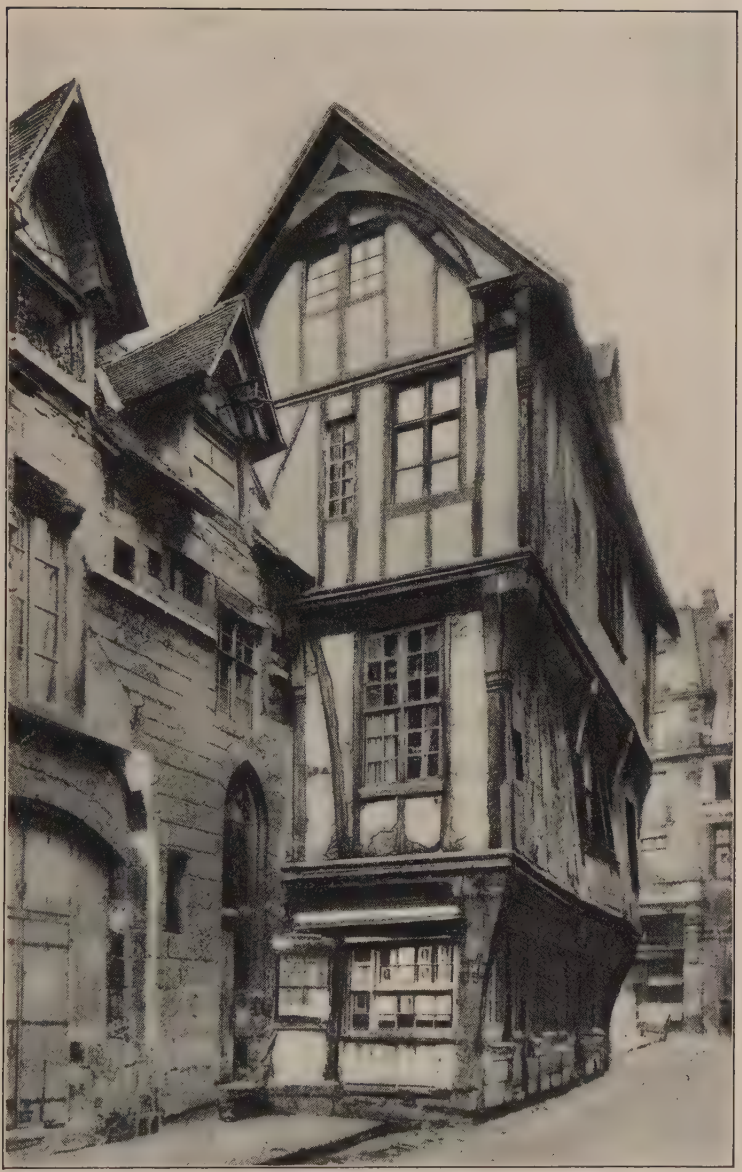
over his cruel oppressor and won a free Normandy for himself.

I 've wanted you with me many times on these antique-ing trips, but most of all I wished you were here last Friday, for then came the *Marché aux Fleurs*. Always, if you have just a few days for Rouen, choose Thursday, and then go down the next morning, very early, to the Place de la Calende, our square, at the right-hand side of the Cathedral. We heard a babel beginning — I should say — at seven o'clock, and when we stepped out of our door, we found our way barred by flowers, a bright patchwork of color; or rather it was like a huge strip of embroidery with the repeated motifs of lilies, geraniums, gillyflowers, dahlias, pinks, marigolds, and sweet peas — oh, more than I can possibly name! I know I counted more than thirty different varieties. And there was an old, old peasant in a white *coiffe*, selling catnip: a thing that until now I have searched for throughout France without avail. Alicia was just as delighted as I was, and we bought a huge bunch with the intention of feeding all the stray pussy-cats in Rouen. But I looked in vain for the "mouron pour les oiseaux" that Flaubert described in *Madame Bovary*.

After we had enjoyed the flowers and the people selling them, we walked down the rue d'Épicerie, — one of the finest slate houses is on this street; the carvings are lovely: angels playing psalteries and lutes,— across the Square of the Old Tower, through

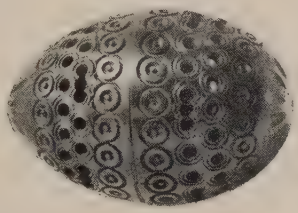
a long lane of mercers and an angle of pastry-shops, into the most primitive market: *métiers de la bouche* and all sorts of other necessities too, in the way of laces and cloths and yarns. There were plums — fat, purply ones with the bloom still on them, heaped high in splint baskets; ducks and hens and pigeons and rabbits, alive and looking at you with reproachful eyes; piles of multi-colored vegetables; great strings of garlic; and mounds of butter and cheese. Even *crême fraiche*, my favorite French delicacy, which really is lyric, although the children insist it tastes like sour cream whipped up. My epicurean inclinations led me into an antique adventure. On the goodwife's table I saw the jolliest little blue-banded copper-lustre pitcher full of the crême. Of course I tried to buy it—would n't you?—but the woman kept shaking her head and saying "*Non! Non!*" till I thought she did n't understand, which surprised and grieved me, because my French has lately become quite intelligible. So I dragged Orde over, and then it developed that the pitcher belonged to a meek little man at the edge of the crowd, who was just waiting patiently to take his marketing home. I still think I could have bullied him into selling it to me, — with a sweet, persuasive smile, you comprehend, — but my cruel husband refused to let me try, and dragged me, protesting, away.

Perhaps that 's why I enjoyed going to the Rag Fair alone and untrammeled. Just as in Paris, this



The rue St.-Romain, a little street at one side of Rouen Cathedral, where the old gabled houses might have looked down on Jeanne d'Arc, as she passed to meet her doom

marché is held on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday; and just as in Paris, too, I got the impression that these poorer people, like the women on Cape Cod who are supposed to make their living by taking in each other's washings, survive by selling backward and forward to their acquaintances. Though, of course, the antique-dealers reap their usual harvest. I don't suppose the casual visitor to Rouen knows anything about this interesting and curious fair,



The small darning-ball, carved, no doubt, by some Norman sailor, that I bought at the Rouen Rag Fair

which is perhaps a ten-minute walk from the Cathedral down the rue Alsace-Lorraine to the Place St.-Marc, and where, as at all these junk-markets, it pays to be an early bird.

Behold the worms that I caught! Two pretty little stenciled trays for fifty centimes each: one in black and gilt, the other with a gay bouquet (Margaret has already claimed them for her room at college); for three francs, a charmingly carved darning-ball which is going far, I know, to relieve the monotony of mending; and for five francs, a fine,

sturdy pair of bellows for my dining-room fireplace. The tone of the reddish-brown wood is just what I need for the hue of the bricks, and I prefer the gouged work of formalized flowers and the brass-studded design to any stenciled pattern I have ever seen. The work reminds me of the Pennsylvania Dutch craftsmanship; in fact, a great many times in Normandy I have seen pieces which suggest a Low Country or even a South German influence. The brightly painted chests are very like the ones you find in Lancaster County, and the drinking-glasses have more than a suggestion of Stiegel.

All my treasures were from tiny stalls or flat-on-the-ground heaps in the open market-place, but there is a covered building where you find the more pretentious shoplets, and where, I fancy, steady searching would produce many really valuable things. I was investigating them when a sudden voice hailed me with the flattering appellation, "Ma petite dame." It is so long since anybody has called me "my little lady" that I paused, *instantly*, and found an agreeable vender who wanted to sell me anything, everything; he aimed to please; and when I discovered nothing in his old metals or furniture, he besought me to come back the next week, when his wife would have a completely new assortment of antiquities. Seriously, I know I shall be sorry when I am at home again and realize that I have none of those Norman iron candlesticks; they are very plain and good-look-

One of the pretty stenciled trays which I bought
for fifty centimes

ing, but I have so many already, and my family laugh at me so whenever I appear with a fresh one, that I just did n't get any. I am beginning to believe, however, that the story of the brass candlestick with flattened slides being *normand* is apocryphal; I have n't found a single one of that type in all my prowling.

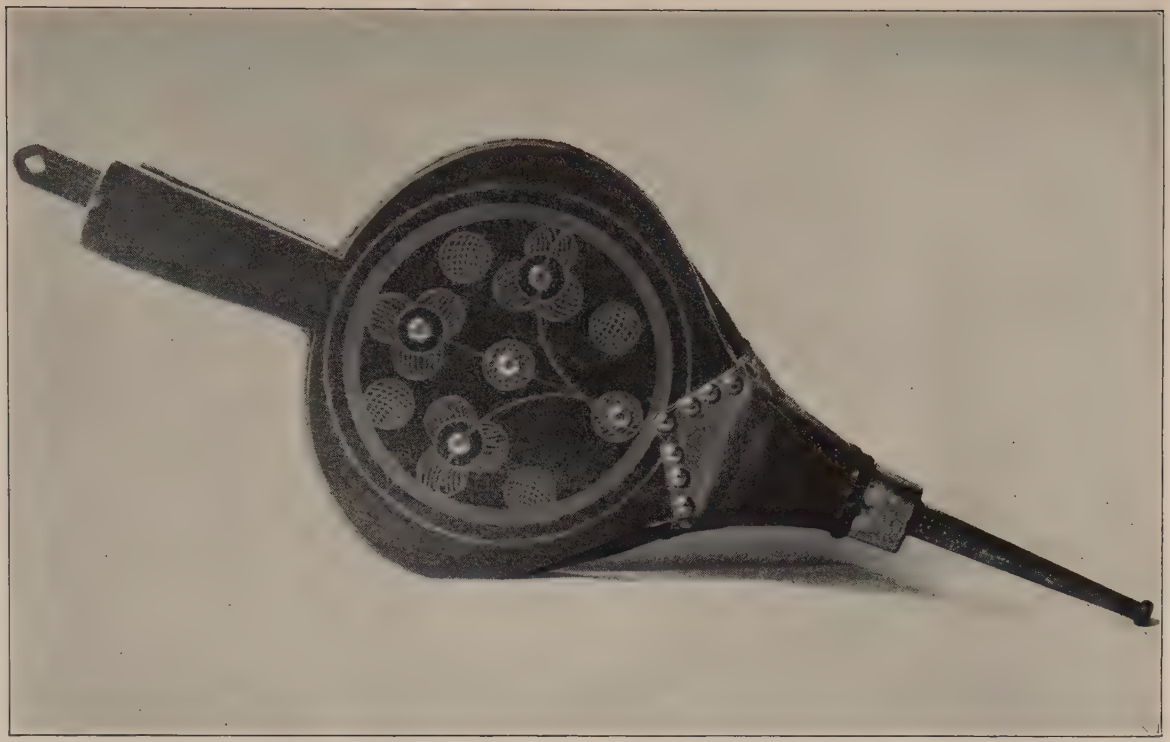
But, by the way, in my search for them I did find a funny little anecdote. I had stopped to look over a windowful of candlesticks, and when I told the patronne what I wanted, she urged me in horror not to think of buying anything so very recent as a candlestick with a slide. "Still, they must be late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, a hundred years old at least," I replied. "But, Madame," she answered solemnly, quite in the manner of Mr. Kipling's small boy from Quebec, "we don't call that old in Rouen!" I suppose they don't. To a town straight out of the Middle Ages a cycle more or less probably seems as a day.

There must be numberless old things throughout this lovely countryside. Three different times in antiquity shops I have seen people come in from the outskirts, offering pieces for sale. One bargain quite enthralled me. Dressed in her most impressive Sunday black, — except in the remotest districts, and even there, only on high holidays, nobody wears any more the bright-hued, wide-skirted peasant costume,— a brisk countrywoman came in where I was examining

mottoed wine-glasses, and asked the proprietor if he would care to buy an old armoire. It was at Yvetot on the Caudebec road, and immediately my nimble fancy bestowed it upon Béranger's amiable king, and I felt convinced that he must have kept his cotton nightcaps in its ample drawers. I shall always wonder about it.

I do wish that we had had time to go antique-ing on our trip to Bouille, a little town an hour's ride up the river from Rouen. I did the Seine an injustice when, in Paris, I called it gray; in the lower reaches it is blue, that intense blue Renoir paints it. And you ride past beauty nearly all the way: by Croisset, Flaubert's home; past Val de la Haye where the second funeral of Napoleon began its stately march to the capital; by the romantic ruins of Robert the Devil's gray old castle, set in the folding hills. Bouille is lovely in its simplicity; we stopped for tea — literally, cool glasses of beer and *limonade* — at a little white inn, hanging close over the water's edge and covered with vines. And then we strolled up through an immaculate Norman town, in and out of narrow streets where the women were busily engaged in sweeping what seemed to us flawlessly clean sidewalks, and up and up a hillside path to the Maison Brulée for dinner.

Do you know, Grace, except for the ivy hanging in thick festoons down the banks, we might have been walking up those rugged little lanes that lead

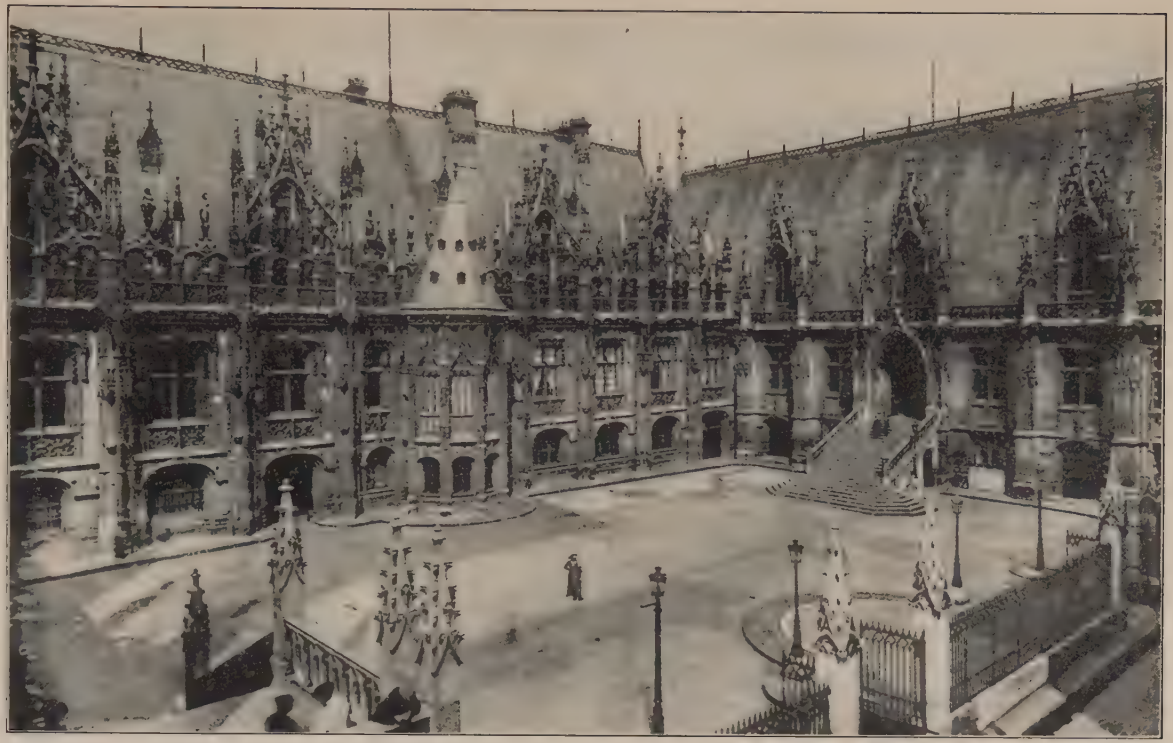


Fine, sturdy bellows for my "friendly fireplace." The gouged carving is very reminiscent of the Pennsylvania Dutch craftsmanship

to Jericho? Blackberries were ripening on the unkempt bushes, and we stopped to pick and eat them just as we do at home. At the top of the hill the open valley stretched for miles below — the wide Seine valley, yellow with ripening grain, and looped by that gorgeous river. You 'll think that I am very provincial, that I carry Hanover with me wherever I go and constantly take it out for comparison; but truly the view did remind me of those glimpses from Sunset Hill. Only I do wish North Country farmers would go back to the wheat-raising days of their forefathers; it would so add to the landscape. Maison Brulée is a pretty place: just a hamlet with a rural inn set in shading trees, where we had an exquisite dinner with the best *petit cidre* I have tasted in Normandy, for, naturally, the season is getting late and this local drink is not at its best. I am aware that etiquette books say that you should not speak of "lovely food," but here I must. For it was! A cream soup, an omelette *aux fines herbes*, salad with mint tossed in the dressing, — it 's unbelievably good, — and for dessert, fresh yellow plums, Pont d'Évêque cheese, and black coffee which fulfilled all the French requisites of being as strong as hate, as sweet as love, and as hot as hell! We enjoyed every bit of it: our table out under the trees, a light breeze cooling the heat, and fat and friendly hens that came to pick up the largesse of our crumbs. Afterward we walked to the little station — for the last boat had long since puffed

down the river — through the forest of La Londe, a greenwood forest where Little Red Riding Hood might suddenly have appeared, trotting along with her cake and her pat of butter, and so lonely that we saw just the forester sitting in front of his thatched cottage, and a trudging peasant pushing a wheelbarrow. And we gathered great armfuls of Queen Anne's lace — I wonder if the French have as beguiling a name as ours for this pretty plant — and clusters of a purple flower that I have never seen in America at all. And so home again to Rouen, our train winding through the shadows of La Londe, and every now and then giving us glimpses of a twilight, silvery Seine curving deep down in the valley.

Our days are very delightful, don't you think? Well, so are our evenings, I assure you. We have found a sidewalk café where we can sit and sip our after-dinner coffee, and watch the sky fading from rose to violet-gray, from purple to velvety black, and the pointed spires of Bonsecours, high up on the cliff, blurring slowly out of sight against it. And listen to super-excellent music — higher in average, I do believe, than anything we hear at the Pops. One night, for example, the orchestra, among many other things, played Schubert's Military March, the overture from Phèdre, Glazunov's Starlit Night, Beethoven's third trio, and the César Franck sonata! I am bringing the programme home with me, because I'm positive you'll doubt my word until you can see it in print.



The admirable Palais de Justice, Rouen, built at the order of Cardinal Georges d'Amboise

Everywhere, every way, we are surrounded by a beauty so poignant that it almost brings tears to our eyes. I 'm torn by a desire to live here the rest of my days, and a longing for my own four walls. For my friends, too! Still, I am very sure that my heart must be much larger than Queen Mary's ever was. She had only Calais; but now, if you open mine, you will see — not just Touraine, or Paris, or Normandy, but all France engraved upon it.

Yours most affectionately,

ALICE

AND THE MORAL —

Yes, as I wrote Louise, I have always maintained that collecting is the one respectable form of gambling. I do not know a more pleasurable diversion, nor one more innocent — honest praise, that assuredly you cannot give to roulette or chemin-de-fer. You start out into a glorious, empty, crowded day — empty of obligations and crowded with possibilities — and you may find everything, and you may come home with nothing at all. Moreover, what good does a gambler get of his gold, once he has gained it? Back on the green table it goes, I fancy. Or it can just buy other things, no gambler being miser enough to hoard it and delight in fingering its silken, gilded surfaces. Besides, money — unless it be of ancient coinage, pieces of eight and deniers of silver, and then it 's a different story — is all so tragically alike. And the collector's rewards vary so joyously: each object holds a precious memory. Still, after all, I suspect that most collectors are at once gambler and miser — a fortunate combination, since first they worship the goddess Chance, and next, like contented children, they play with their happy discoveries.

Or, if you prefer, collecting is comparable to the thrill of pirate gold and buried treasure. And I'm

sure that the buccaneers of old romance brought back with them something besides mere sacks of doubloons; I'm very sure they had memories as well of "green days and forests and blue days and sea." So I too, whenever I polish my silvery pressed-glass cup and saucer, remember the ancient, tranquil Square of the Archbishopric, and the tall towers of my beloved St.-Gatien, where the rooks flew cawing, to and fro, and the bells rang out those swift spring hours. And my lacquered boîte à thé is a magic box, a Pandora's box, but full of jolly imps. Open it, and out fly all the blithe and vagabondish days we spent at the Rag Fair, coming home so dusty and disheveled and laden down with newspaper-wrapped bundles that everybody in the Métro smiled and knew where we'd been. And if ever I were in danger of forgetting Paris,— which I am not and shall never be! — I should put on my églomisé locket, and the small black-and-gold lady would bring back that July weather when the city lay shimmering in the heat, and bright flowers bloomed in the almost deserted Luxembourg Gardens, and I stole out in the cool of the morning to buy her at the little shop on the rue de Tournon. "Ah, qu'ils étaient beaux, les jours de France!" I love every single thing I brought with me to America, but infinitely more I value the memories my silhouettes and candlesticks and glass evoke. And that 's what collecting can do for you.

But burning incense at the shrine of Chance and

rejoicing in your dear antiquities are not the only necessities for successful collecting; to them you must add the attributes which Balzac declares are so essential: "les jambes du cerf, le temps des flâneurs, et la patience de l'Israélite." Always an amateur of elusive beauty, Balzac knew how much persistent endurance accomplishes, and *Le Cousin Pons* is incomparably the greatest collecting-novel ever written.

Another bit of advice to the American collector. I have invariably found my compatriots either absurdly afraid of being swindled, or, like the White Queen, determined to "believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast." Those of you who have read that delightful *Collector's Whatnot* will not need a warning to avoid the pewter plates embellished with salamanders or porcupines or ermines. Yet I've known guileless ladies who bought them for a few francs in the fond delusion that they had acquired rarities dating back to the time of the early Renaissance — the climax of impossibility at any hour of the day! And, as a further counsel, I should pass by miniatures unless I bought them at a good price, and at a shop reliable enough to be willing to give a written guaranty of their genuineness. You see, there are too many to be probable; on my prowls I saw such quantities of slim blue ladies and powdered-haired gentlemen that I felt as if all the young artists in the Latin Quarter must be turning a dis-

honest penny by reviving the eighteenth century. Faïence will prove another stumbling-block. There is a factory which makes reproductions of Strasbourg, Rouen, Nevers — oh, all the old potteries are represented. They are made in strict honesty, and they are sold for precisely what they are at a shop on the Boulevard de l'Opéra; but some antiquity-dealers are less scrupulous, and you will often find these pretty colored plates and platters and vases offered for sale as authentic pieces of old faïence.

Still, in collecting, is n't it always a matter of letting the buyer beware? The lover of the past must be astute in any country, even in New England where, nowadays, nice old ladies are bringing from their capacious cupboards cleverly "faked" Benjamin Franklin cup-plates and selling them as their grandmothers' wedding glass! On the whole I have found French dealers quite as honest as American. And almost invariably more courteous. They are so anxious to please, so very welcoming, while here — to be candid — I encounter what Mr. Flandrau calls the manner of "dethroned empresses." I think I 'd recommend a residence in France as an improvement to anybody's manners!

May I tell you a tale that is the blending of both honesty and courtesy? One June morning, toward the end of my stay in Tours, I stepped from the glaring blue of the rue de la Scellerie into the colored dusk of a small and charming magasin d'antiquités.

There were pleasant *bon jour, Madame's;* we commiserated each other on the deplorable heat; and then I asked if she had any mirrors. She had but one, it appeared — a lovely Louis Quinze piece with suave gilt carvings, repaired a little; she meticulously pointed out the places where new wood had been inset. But when I asked the price, she told me it was not for sale; that, early in the war, an American soldier had asked her to save it for him and paid a generous deposit upon it. Years had passed, and he had never come back to claim it, but still she was holding it for him. It would have been so easy for her to forget, — he may never return, you know, — but I truly think that this engaging mirror, despite its many admirers, is going to go on waiting, waiting for him to come.

Of course it is an advantage being an American. Not only because the French are so adorably kind to you, — an admirable trait in itself, — but I mean the pure financial consideration a collector must have for her pocketbook. It is always possible, without lacking tact, to ask for a receipted bill declaring the value and the age of the purchase — the greatest help in time of need, when you arrive at the customs house. Though if you buy as I did,— at the fairs and along the quais, — it will be wisdom to carry with you a number of the stamps which must be attached to these so necessary documents. The little *marchands* are too poor to have them, and besides,

their gains are too small for anybody to want to cut them down further.

Naturally, everything over a century old comes in duty free, but a receipted bill often saves an argument, and an argument when you are hurrying to catch a train, and your purse is very, very flat, is a thing to be avoided if you can do it. Oftentimes my friends behave as if I had employed some sort of white magic in getting as much through the customs as I did. Let me tell you a secret. I had a hundred dollars' exemption! And so will you! And a hundred dollars goes a long way in France in buying antiquities; all the treasures that I brought back cost only a little more than fifty dollars. National points of view differ, and age, like everything else, is relative; there were times in France when I felt that only King Dagobert's chair was considered respectably old! Now candlesticks, for instance; why — candlesticks that we pay ridiculous prices for here are as simple primroses on the river's brim to any Frenchwoman. Which kindly scorn is an enormous help to modest collections on this side of the water. But if I were buying largely, purchasing expensive and grandiloquent pieces of furniture, I 'd not only get my receipted bills, but I 'd take those bills, and go to my consul, and get an official declaration — a troublesome thing, I am told, although persistence will accomplish it. And then, the time you spend in France will undoubtedly be saved in America, a very agreeable fact to contemplate.

Ah, I so much envy you who are going awhile to the pleasant land of France. But it 's the nicest sort of envy; not in the least the breaking-the-tenth-commandment kind. I really do wish you all the luck I had — and more, too. If you collect the right way, you will gather such marvels for rainy days at home: beauty and ancient legends and endearing kindness, far more valuable than just the things themselves. So, my dear buccaneers of modern romance, dig up your pirate gold, and no one will rejoice more than I; not a glint of your gay adventuring will I covet. But I shall refuse to admit you to my Band of Chosen Collectors if you return with empty hearts and hands.

Alice Van Leer Carrick

APPENDIX

ANTIQUITY SHOPS

Here are the lists, my dear Friends in Collecting: shops where I bought things, and shops where I longed in vain. Not that the prices were too high, but because there must be a limit to your purchases. All of these dealers I found to be courteous, and, I believe, reliable, although, as I invariably insist, your own taste and knowledge should be your guide. And, of course, the flotsam and jetsam which form an antiquarian's stock-in-trade are constantly changing; you may find your candlesticks on the rue des Saints-Pères, and your pewter at the Place de l'Odéon. What I have tried to give you are general, assisting directions. So do not hesitate to take your collecting courage in both trusting hands, for I know that the luck that was mine may be yours, too.

Paris

H. Manière: 103, rue de Rennes
Excellent and reliable; M. Manière always has interesting silhouettes and snuffboxes.

Madame Favre: 76, rue de Rennes
A delightful little "hole-in-the-wall" shop; here I bought my flip-glass for thirty francs.

Madame Elvire Weigt: 15, rue de Tournon
Always many pretty bibelots; from her I purchased my eighteenth-century *églomisé* locket, and my Empire lady with the gold beads and charming comb.

Paul Passerat: 29, rue de Tournon
A decorator, really, but often you will find interesting small pieces in his shop; I bought my glass candlesticks and my little *bonbonnière* here.

Madame Guigon: 22, rue de Vaugirard
Madame is always amiable and obliging; a good deal of my collecting education came from her, and it was here that I found my candlesticks, and the little *brasero*.

F. Martal: 44, rue de Vaugirard
He has good small pieces; occasionally excellent chairs.

Aux Deux Masques: 1, rue Monsieur-le-Prince
In this shop the antiquities are usually Oriental, but sometimes there is pretty faïence for sale.

T. Drukker: 81, rue des Saints-Pères
A very good place for old shawls and brocades.

Henri Kaner: 3, rue des Saints-Pères
I did not buy anything here, but his shop was full of charming opportunities.

R. Gautier: 71, rue des Saints-Pères
Here you will find old frames, excellent frame reproductions, and occasionally good mirrors.

T. Lematte: 14, rue St.-Sulpice
A commendable place to buy pewter. Madame is very frank about any reproduction she has.

Madame Vve. Lepley: 11, rue Jacob
She has pretty, simple pieces of peasant furniture, and her prices are reasonable.

Madame Fabius: 2, Place de l'Odéon
A "mixtry," good, bad, and indifferent, but bargains are to be found here.

L. Boulat: Boulevard Raspail
I bought my first silhouette here. He seems to have interesting old jewelry and clocks.

"Le Vieux Logis": 15, rue du Vieux Colombier
Such a charming shop, and always pretty, not-too-high antiquities for sale.

Cerette Mayer: 10, rue du Vieux Colombier
Mlle. Cerette is the great character of the antiquity shops. Her place is a jumble, but since she has been able to present a case of lovely jewelry to the Louvre, I have no hesitation in recommending her.

A. Lagriffoul: 17, rue de Grenelle
Here I bought my first *églomisé* silhouette. He always seems to have interesting old brocades and damasks.

Albert Lamy: 42, rue de Richelieu
There are very lovely things in this shop, particularly old silver and bead bags, but the prices are much higher than on the Left Bank.

Mon. Vve. Houry: 91, rue Legendre

I have never seen the shop which, I think, is out by Batignolles; anyhow the *arrondissement* is 17. But at the Foire aux Ferrailles, where I met her, I thought her stall one of the most interesting there. I got L——'s lustre sugar-bowl from her.

P. Laisis: 10, rue de la Boetie

Here the prices were higher, naturally, than at the Left Bank shops, but the antiquities were charming, and, from an American point of view, not over-high. The young woman in charge told me, — and I, in turn, tell you, — that Elsie DeWolfe often bought things from her; and you know what a recommendation that is!

The Quais

Paulus Lacoste: Quai Montebello

I bought my colored English silhouette from him, and he usually has some engaging small objects. He also "follows the fairs," and you 're apt to meet him at the Sebastopol Rag Fair and at the Foire aux Ferrailles.

Jean Lafond: 15, Parapet Quai Voltaire

Artist friends recommend him very highly, and, although I bought nothing from him, I thought his prints charming.

Lucien Dubois:

Alas, I have lost his card, and I cannot tell you the precise Quai, but it is "en face de la porte de Monnaie," and not far from Notre Dame. I bought my prints from him, and I think him reassuringly honest.

The Marche aux Puces

Madame Marie-Louise

After the twenty-first of May ask for her "à côté de la Chaumière." She is very obliging: willing to turn the antique world over to find what you want.

Other Suggestions

If you want a good *emballeur*, here is the address of one recommended to me by Madame Guigon — O. Gauthier, 6, rue Monsieur-le-Prince. If, like me, you buy most of your things in the Latin Quarter, he will be conveniently at hand.

And if, when you are at the Foire aux Ferrailles you *don't* want to starve to death and *do* want to stay all day long, the one good restaurant

anywhere near that I recall is La Bonne Bière, Boulevard Faubourg du Temple. You can get a delicious lunch here, and then, refreshed, go back to your researches. I know, because the other ones I tried did n't satisfy my æsthetic senses. And, of course, there are several little restaurants near the Marché aux Puces, though none that will remind you of Voisin's. Still I do think a really earnest "antiquer" ought to be able to endure a good deal!

Touraine

Tours

Jules Millet: 14, Place Emile-Zola
A delightful shop occupying the lower floor of a house near the Cathedral. It looks expensive, but it is n't, for I bought my glass cup and saucer here for twelve francs.

E. D'Espelosin: 26, rue de la Scellerie
Here the things are beautiful and not too high. Here, also, is the mirror that is being saved for the unreturning American soldier.

Georges Aubaud: 55, rue de la Scellerie
This is the shop where I fell in love with that beautiful pair of walnut chairs that O—— would n't let me buy, although they were only forty dollars.

Decoussé: 99, rue de la Scellerie
On the back of my card I have written "amiable woman, good furniture, reasonable prices," and my memory recalls the fact that she had lovely brocades, and that her *armoires* were, perhaps, fifty dollars apiece.

P. Bruneau: 62, rue de la Scellerie
This is one of the better-class shops, but, while the prices are rather higher than at some of the others, the antiquities are pretty and well chosen.

Paul Riehl: 45, rue de la Scellerie
A sort of general sales-shop, principally new, but, occasionally, old pieces are brought in to be sold. It is very like our own auction rooms, in fact.

À l'Art Ancien: 26, bis, rue de la Scellerie
High-class, high-priced, but reliable.

Mademoiselle Alice Chartier: 39, rue du Commerce
Rather expensive, but always interesting, and Mademoiselle Alice herself is delightful. She has a wide knowledge of her subject.

Eugène Gavaud: 51, rue du Commerce

I bought my little oak stool here. While most of the things he has are high, by looking about you can find bargains.

Georges Denis: 18, rue Gambetta

He seems to have a large American clientèle, and, certainly, some of his furniture is beautiful. I saw a set of carved slat-back chairs there, that seemed to me reasonable in comparison with the prices you pay in America.

C. Sabouré: 2, rue du Change

This is the antiquity-shop in the fifteenth-century gabled house. I don't care for his salamander pewter, but his old drinking-glasses, beautifully engraved and pontil-marked, are reasonable and well worth having.

Bétinas: 76, rue du Grand-Marche

He is a *brocanteur*, but if you are willing to climb and climb, look through heaps of old iron, and poke around generally, you 're sure to find something for almost nothing.

Bouard-Léaument: 61, rue du Grand-Marche

Brocanteurs, also; here I got my slender silver spoons, and I am sure that constant visits would produce excellent results.

Bouillaigeot-Demurant: 47, rue du Grand-Marche

A higgledy-piggledy place, but I bought my little *confiturières* here for ten francs. These people, also, have a stall at the edge of the market on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and often they have desirable little oddments. I picked up there my little *chauffe-plat* for something like fifteen cents.

Chatry (*emballeur*): 5, rue de la Prefécture

The packing was beautifully done, everything arrived without the slightest accident, and the price was negligible.

Blois

F. Mazau: 18, rue Saint-Honoré

Here I bought my glass dish with the braided border and my loveliest iron latch. Altogether, it is a shop full of delightful things.

Jean Barbat: 14, rue Saint-Honoré

Another interesting and excellent shop.

LOCHES

L. Hamard: 3, rue Quinteffol
Some furniture, interesting brocades, and odds and ends. I got my little wine-mugs and my "Charles the Seventh" candlestick from this place.

E. Lezé: 19, Grand-rue
This dealer has lovely and inexpensive pieces of old silver.

Lamiré: Grand-rue
The number I cannot give, for this brocanteur's shop was closed both times I tried to get in and all I could do was to look with despair through the window at huddled heaps of bargains.

AMBOISE

A. Rabot: 86, rue Nationale
Although I bought nothing here, I remember that the prices were not high, and the things themselves were very pretty.

Blanc-Boyer: 14, rue Nationale
The shop where the tragedy of my lost armoire occurred. A good place to keep in touch with, I should say, since brocanteurs are always having old things happen in.

LANGEAIS

Berthon: rue de Jeanne d'Arc
There are no shops here, but, if you have time as you walk up this crooked little street, stop and see if M. Berthon has n't some interesting *fer forgé* for sale.

Rouen

E. de Vivar: 56, rue Beauvoisin
One of the two best shops in Rouen; certainly the largest and a very happy hunting-ground indeed. Also, the proprietor and his assistant speak excellent English.

P. Daussy: 48, rue Beauvoisin
A good shop; the wine glasses and motto drinking-glasses, enameled like Stiegel glass, are cheap and pretty.

Madame Vve. Leroy: 41, rue Beauvoisin
A little shop where old brocades, silks, and laces are for sale at reasonable prices.

Jules Taurin: 4, Place Barthélemy
The other "best" shop in Rouen, full of beguiling bargains, and with an intelligent and obliging proprietor.

Albert Paté: 228, rue Martainville
The little shop where I bought my two Staffordshire bowls. Very inexpensive.

Au Plat d'Étain: 39, rue St.-Nicolas
One of the better shops; slightly high as to price, but with many pretty, desirable things to buy.

Monsieur Vaumousse: 70, rue de la Grosse-Horloge
I bought nothing here, but the old silver was charming, and not expensive.

I. Gay: 128, rue St.-Vivien
Here the prices are much lower than in the middle of the town. It really is a *brocanteur's* shop.

M. Noury: 15, rue du Vieu-Palais
A little shop where there is a good deal of interesting copper, pewter, and brass for sale.

Mme. Vve. Baudouin: 18, rue Ganterie
The prices were medium, the things interesting. I remember particularly a toilet bowl and pitcher with silver-lustre decoration.

Mme. Vve. Touroude: 8, rue Restout
The little shop near Saint-Laurent, where I bought my *garniture de cheminée* and my Mocha-ware mug.

Jules Acard: 23, Place de la Rougemare
A shop full of interesting smaller pieces; occasionally very good peasant furniture.

P. Levron: 8, Place St.-Armand
I got my little copper pieces here. A brocanteur's in reality; I saw a number of poor people coming in with things to sell.

E. Hardy: 126, rue St.-Vivien
Apparently the proprietor buys unredeemed pledges from pawnbrokers. The old Norman jewelry is very interesting; I like the copper and thought it inexpensive; the brass sieves were quite stunning and massive. Here I bought my stenciled tray and snuffers.

Collector's Luck

By Alice Van Leer Carrick

BETWEEN the French marbled covers of this attractive volume will be found the secret of how your home may attain the charm of stenciled furniture, lustre pitchers and teacups, pressed glassware, old woven coverlets and counterpanes, antique lights and lamps.

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